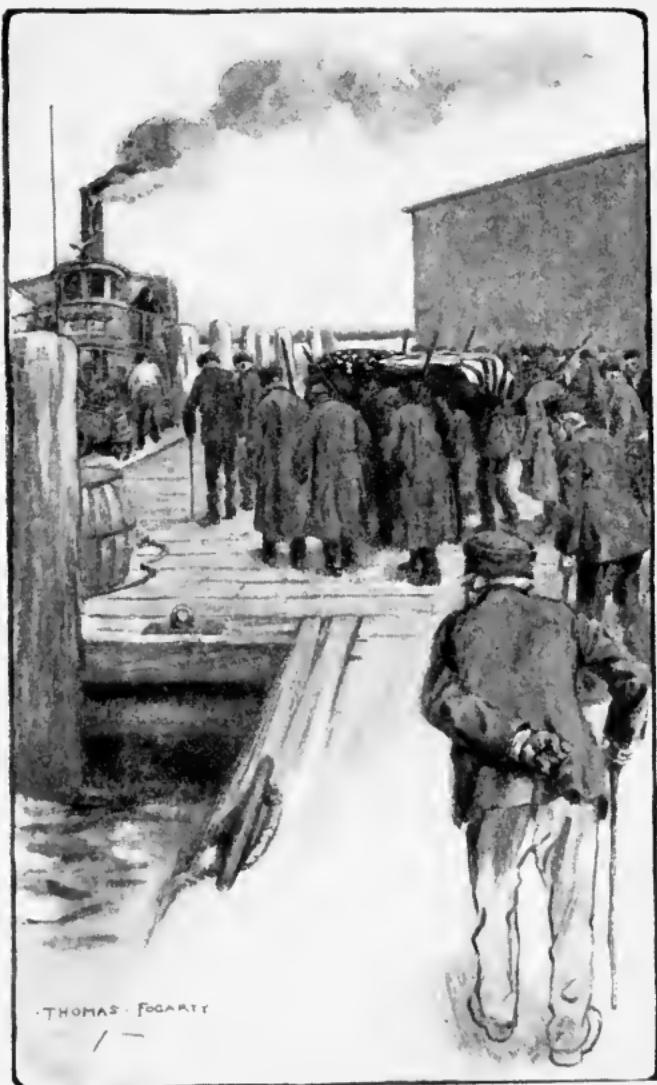


Toomey and Others



ROBERT SHACKLETON

TOOMEY AND OTHERS



The shambling old fellows were proceeding very slowly.

TOOMEY AND OTHERS

BY

ROBERT SHACKLETON

ILLUSTRATED

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HOW TOOMEY WILLED HIS
GOVERNMENT JOB

HOW TOOMEY WILLED HIS GOVERNMENT JOB

“I BEING in sound mind and body, do I, hereby resign my position in the Custom-house ; and, being after dying, as I fully believe, and of sound mind and body as aforesaid, do hereby will my job, which I have held so long, to my good friend Dennis Duggan ; and I hope Michael McShea will agree to this, and I hereby ask him to give the job to Duggan, this being my last will.”

It was in broken sentences, for he was very weak, that old Toomey slowly dictated the document, and it was with evident pride in the composition. “ You see how careful I am to put that in about being in sound body and mind ? ” he said, as Duggan slowly wrote down the words. “ It’s points like them that spoils many

a will, Duggan; but you see I look out for you—I look out for you, Dennis."

"Yes," said Duggan, sighing deeply; and he caught the eye of the comely Mrs. Toomey, so soon to be a widow, and she sighed mournfully in return. "Yes, Toomey, and there's only one point more. It isn't signed yet, and many a will's been lost through not being signed—many a will's been lost through that. Will you sign it now, Toomey?"

Toomey answered with a touch of irritation. "Oh, I'm not so near going as that, Dennis. I've life in me yet, even though my time may be near at hand."

"The—the—doctor—" sobbed Mrs. Toomey. She was thinking of the doctor's prophecy as to the few hours of life remaining to her husband. Now, Toomey never liked to hear Mrs. Toomey sob, and so, to divert her mind from her grief, he said: "Here, Duggan, give me that pencil, and after I sign it Mary'll sign it as a witness." And so Toomey signed the will, and Mary witnessed it; and then he signed another will, giving to his wife all of his property "both really and in per-

son," as he expressed it ; and then he lay back wearily, and his face grew ashen pale. Little by little he gasped out :

" It'll be all right now—it'll be all right. There's nobody to dispute the money with you, Mary, but brother Tim's children and my cousins. But you'll file the will at court, and there's \$2,300 in the three banks, and you'll get it. And the other will, Duggan, it don't need to be filed in any court, for it concerns a job that's nobody's business but McShea's and mine."

His earthly business thus concluded, he turned his face toward the open window, and looked out across the tenement street, and listened to the myriad of sounds that floated up to him. And again Duggan dolefully sighed, and again sighed the comely widow that was to be. It was a hot evening in midsummer, following a torrid day ; and Eldridge Street is one of the most densely populated neighborhoods of that most densely crowded portion of New York. Toomey had lived in his simple rooms, on the top floor of his particular tenement, for a quarter of a cen-

tury, and had grown to love all of the neighborhood sights and sounds.

“Who’s any happier than me?” he was wont to say. And to-night, as he looked and listened, the thought came to him, more bitterly than at any previous time in the course of his illness, that it was very hard to go away and leave all this. For many classes and conditions go to the making up of the life of the great East Side. There is poverty there, and there is inconceivable crowding, and there is lack of food and air, and there is unspeakable misery; but there is also much of happiness, and there are many who have plenty of money for comforts and gayeties. Squalor and prosperity are constant neighbors, not only on the same streets, but in the same huge tenements.

Toomey looked at the scores of people who clung sprawlingly on the iron fire-escapes and balconies that gridironed the fronts of the buildings—and gridirons they in very truth still were, as the sun, after baking them to a furious heat, was but a short time set, and the iron was still warm. But the population of the street, men and

women and children, were mostly ambulatory, and moved aimlessly about, and shifted back and forth on the pavement and sidewalks below. The shuffling of feet, the chirring hum of talk, the screams of children as they played together or savagely tore at each other in wrath, came up to Toomey, and he thought again of how sad it was to lose it all. To a stranger the sounds would have been an indistinguishable medley, but the practised ear of Toomey could disassociate each from each.

He heard the vibrant clink of glasses in the near-by saloon. He heard the sinister clang of the patrol wagon, while it was still two blocks away, but to him it was but one of the many sounds that united to enhance the attractiveness of the street. "I wonder if it's Tim Hogan, and if he's been beating his wife again," he murmured. Above the confused dissonance he caught the distant sounds of a Salvation Army squad, and gently smiled as he listened to the notes of "There's a Land that is Fairer than Day."

The tune ceased, and he half whispered : "Yes, and that's where I'm going. And

I only hope the district leader up there will be as square as Michael McShea, for if he is I'll be all right." He paused a moment. "They're kneeling now," he said. And his wife and Duggan looked at each other and commiseratingly shook their heads, thus mutely agreeing that poor Toomey was becoming delirious.



"But he's given you all the money straight enough," said Duggan, drawing close to her. "Yes; and he's given you the job," she responded.

From the corner of a fire-escape diagonally opposite shone the fitful glow of

a pipe, and Toomey knew that Irene Baumann and her lover were there, that corner of that fire-escape having been adopted as their own, and yielded by the other tenement dwellers through courtesy, as they all knew that Irene's mother objected to the girl's going with the young man to the parks or recreation piers. Against the fronts of the buildings huge shadows, cast by the street-lights, grotesquely flung themselves. The notes of a twangy guitar floated in from a rear tenement.

Old Toomey's eyes wearily closed. "It's all so good. I hate to leave it. And what will—they—do without me?" He was not, however, thinking of his wife as he said this, but of many of the needy to whom he was in the habit of doing little kindnesses; but even in his whispered self-communion he did not mention any names, for he was always reticent about the good that he did.

Toomey had for twenty-three years held a position in the Custom-house. It was not a place of great consequence. It was only that of a packer and weigher, and

it had only yielded the sum of \$725 a year. But in his own estimation and in that of his friends there was a certain dignity attaching to the position, more than to that of street-sweeper or assistant janitor of a public building, for example, and so he had been the object of considerable good-natured envy, which had, of course, been enhanced by the length of time that he had been able to hold the place. There were many who would prize the job, now that he was giving it up.

“Duggan, I’ve willed you a good thing,” he whispered, faintly, turning his head from the window. Duggan bent over him in deep concern. “Will there be any trouble about my getting it?” he asked. Toomey tried to shake his head. “How could there be?” he answered. “McShea’s never had anything against me!”

Duggan tried to make conversation, clumsily feeling this much to be incumbent upon him, after such a gift, even in the presence of soon-coming death. “Who’s the Collector of Customs in New York now?” he asked; but Toomey answered, with a touch of impatience:

"I—don't—just remember; I—don't—know—as—I ever knew."

"No, of course not," replied Duggan, soothingly. "Of course not. You never had any reason to. I'll ask McShea, if I ever need to know. He's been district leader for a great many years, hasn't he, Toomey? And it's many years that you've held your job under him."

"A long time, and always gave McShea the fullest satisfaction," sobbed Mrs. Toomey. "But McShea'll get another good man when Duggan takes your place," she added, as she dried her eyes on a hem of her skirt. Toomey, although dying, looked a trifle annoyed, and frowned ever so little, but the other two, looking at each other in mutual commiseration, did not notice it.

"And who was President of the United States when you first got the job?" Duggan continued, still under the impression that the circumstances of such a gift demanded appreciative conversation from him.

"I—don't—know; but McShea was—" Toomey stopped, and could not complete the sentence.

"Yes, yes, poor fellow. You've served under a good many presidents and a good many collectors. Do you remember who was the Collector of Customs, in this city, when you first got your place?"

"No. I never—paid—any—attention—to presidents or collectors," the dying man whispered. "My district leader was the only man I ever thought of."

"And that's just so," put in Mrs. Toomey. "Such things as collectors or presidents never makes no difference. You must always remember that, Dennis. It's the district leader that's the one to look out for. Whatever he says, always goes. Keep solid with McShea, Dennis, and you'll hold the job as long as—" But here she again had recourse to the hem of her skirt. Toomey noticed this, and hurriedly strove to create a diversion. "If I was you, Duggan, I'd get after McShea right off. It'll be all right if he knows I want you to have the job, and have put it in my will, but he may hear of my being sick, and—"

His face again grew very white, and he became so weak that it seemed as if death was near at hand. The doctor, who at

that moment arrived, stepped briskly to his bedside, while Duggan, spurred on by the fear of losing his job, hurried off to find McShea. At the foot of the long series of stairways he met the priest.

Duggan found the district leader in a saloon on the Bowery, below the rooms of the political club of the district. With a great deal of trepidation, for he had always held the great man in awe, he stepped up to him. "Toomey's dying, and he's made this will," he blurted out.

McShea, leaning against the bar, slowly read the paper that Duggan nervously poked up into his face, and then looked back at Duggan with much of dubiety. McShea was very stout, with grizzled hair, deep-set eyes, bulbous nose, and firm lips. His face at first sight seemed ordinary, but a second glance showed that it expressed capacity of an unusual order, and you began to realize how it was that he had been able to hold the position of district leader in his assembly district for nearly thirty years.

For a district leader, to be successful, must be a man of determination and abil-

ity, full of tact and resourcefulness. He is the head of his clan, and his clan is composed of every voter of his party in the district. He sees to it that his tribesmen have their full proportion of city jobs, both transient and of the more permanent character. For instance, when a big hotel burns down, and many lives are lost, and the city puts hundreds of laborers at work clearing the ruins in the search for bodies, each district leader in the city—if his is the party in charge of the city's politics—hurries the unemployed men of his district to the contractor, and the contractor must fairly balance the claims of all, or else he is sure to obtain no further jobs from the city.

When a voter is sick, the district leader is expected to see to it that he is cared for. When the voter is in need, his need must be relieved, or else an order must be obtained, transferring the sufferer to the Almshouse or a public hospital. The head of the district clan has all the responsibilities of a tribal chief. And for the many benefits, actual and potential, of which he stands as the source, he expects an un-

questioning return. The men must vote right at every election, and those who aim to get the most benefits must keep up their membership in the local political club.

McShea looked at Duggan doubtfully. He set his glass down, and it stood in a beery ring. He slowly wiped his lips on a towel that hung beneath the bar. Several members of the district club, who had been sitting at dingy tables, lounged forward. They cast hostile glances at Duggan, who nervously asked them all to drink. They promptly did so, and then, putting their glasses down in five beery rings, and wiping five mouths on the hanging towels, resumed their hostile looks.

“Duggan wants Toomey’s place. You’ve all heard he’s very sick. Well, Toomey’s willed his job to Duggan,” said McShea, in curt explanation. There were times when, contrary to his usual habit of deciding alone, he chose to submit questions to his retainers, and the matter of Toomey’s job he felt to be a fitting one for such a submission. He smiled grimly as he noted the angry clouding of the five countenances. Duggan weakly told the

barkeeper to "ask the gentlemen what they would have," but this time they all refused to drink, and scowled upon him in a darkling circle.

"We heard that Toomey might die," said McShea, "and there are forty-two members of the club who are applicants for his job."

"And each of us is a man as has paid his dues square up," put in one of the men.

"But I'm only behind because I've been out of work," protested Duggan; "and I'll pay up all my back dues out of my first month's pay."

The circle sniffed. "When you get the job," said one. The circle laughed, and Duggan flushed with mortification. McShea looked on, judicially contemplative. "When's Toomey likely to die?" he asked.

"The doctor says to-night'll be the last—that he'll sure go before morning," replied Duggan. "And that's why he wanted me to see you at once about his job."

"That's bad," said McShea. "Poor



“ But I’m only behind because I’ve been out of work.”
protested Duggan.

fellow! I didn't know he was quite so sick as that. I'll go up and see him to-night."

"But about his job—" began Duggan again, persistently.

The district leader's patience gave way. He had been somewhat embarrassed by the forty-two applications, and the difficulty of deciding so as to make no enemies, and he was really annoyed that this will should further complicate the situation. He knew that many would believe that Toomey's last will should be respected, and he also knew that there would be inevitable dissatisfaction should the desirable job be given to Duggan, who had been derelict with his membership and dues. He turned on Duggan sharply.

"Why didn't you apply to the President? Don't you know this is a job in the United States Custom-house? What have I got to do with it, do you suppose?"

Duggan looked at him, open-mouthed.

"You're the district leader, and—and Toomey always said——"

Still more irritated, McShea interrupted him. "And don't you know that at least

the Collector of Customs is the head of his own department here, and that he's got all the say in such matters? I'm the district leader? Yes! But what have I got to do with all you fellows, except to keep track of your meetings and the way you vote? Do you expect me to settle every question that comes up? Take that will to the Collector, and see if he'll give you the job!"

Duggan's mouth was open wider than ever, and the jaws of the other five also dropped. The idea, thus propounded by their leader, awed them. They exchanged glances of dumb amazement, and every man spat solemnly into the big wooden cuspidore. Duggan was the first to recover himself. "Ah, you're just guyin' us! There's nobody bigger'n the district leader. Whatever you say goes, and there ain't no collector going to say a word. See?"

McShea deigned to unbend. "What'll it be?" he said. And the line, including Duggan, straightened up, and seven elbows simultaneously arose.

"And now, Duggan, you go back to Toomey. You can tell him that the ques-

tion of who gets his job must be left to a vote of the club. There's too many members who have paid their dues and want the job, and who told me so before I heard of his will, to let me decide on the matter without giving them a chance to be heard."

"But Toomey thought——"

"Never you mind, just now, what Toomey thought! You go along, and we'll see what can be done."

"If it's going to be left to us," put in one of the men with a sour grin, "why, you can tell Toomey that I want the job myself." "And me, too!" cried another, as the swinging screen hit the disappearing Duggan in the back. "And we've all paid our dues reg'lar!"

The crestfallen Duggan did not hurry back, and when he reached Toomey's tenement both the doctor and the priest had gone. Toomey, fully prepared for death by bodily and spiritual ministrations, was talking with his wife. He had been told that he was unexpectedly holding his strength, and that there might still be a leeway of half a day or so. This had

cheered him, and his eyes were brighter as he glanced out of the window, and he feebly hummed in unison with the guitar that some one was still twanging, out of tune, in the rear tenement.

“There’s the Aarons going to bed on the corner of the roof. It’s a wonder, with all their children, that none of them ever falls over the edge! And there’s Irene Baumann’s young man going. He always goes at half-past nine sharp, for he works in a gas-house and has to be there at ten. And there’s the patrol gong again! I’ll bet it’s after Tim Hogan this time! I wonder if the judge’ll send him to the Island or let him off with a fine!”

His eyes were alight with eagerness, but a broken sob from his wife recalled him to a realization of the fact that in all probability he was not going to be on hand to know how the case would be decided.

“Don’t cry, Mary. And don’t let me dying make you very unhappy. You’ve got all the money—and—I want you to be sure—after a while—not to be—lonely. There’s other good men—and maybe—after a good while——”

"You were always so thoughtful for me," she sobbingly spluttered. "And, if you really mean it, and want me to, I think I'll do as you tell me to!"

"Ah!" murmured Toomey. And then he again lay very still, listening to the noises of the street, for in midsummer the East Side never really goes to sleep. The noises were, however, gradually changing in character, and lights were flitting about in the tenements across the way. More and more came the realization of all that he was about to lose, and he answered in monosyllables several questions tearfully put to him by his wife. And then came in the disappointed Duggan.

"McShea won't let me have the job! He says there's too many asked for it before he knew of your will!"

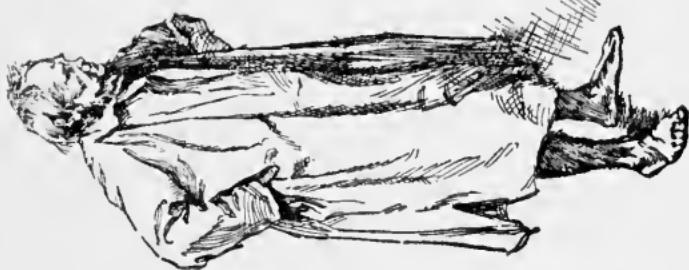
"Won't let me will my own property as I want to!" exclaimed the dying man. "A job I've held for over twenty years!" He sat up in the bed, disregarding Mrs. Toomey's frightened expostulations.

"No, he won't!" said Duggan. Toomey put one foot over the edge of the bed. "I'll go and see him myself!" he said.

"But you're dying! You're dying!" wailed his wife. Just then the shrewdly forceful face of McShea peered in at the door. He had knocked, but in the excitement no one had noticed it. The district leader looked from Toomey to his wife, and from her to Duggan. Then he looked hard at Toomey again. Mrs. Toomey and Duggan looked at each other and then back at the dying man. No one spoke, till Toomey himself, putting his other foot over the side of the bed, broke the silence. "I feel so much stronger, that I was just going to go and see you," he said; "about my government job, you know, and my will."

McShea's eyes twinkled. "Toomey, it's no use. There's too many after it. If I was you, and feeling as strong as you seem to, I'd keep my job, and my wife, and my money!"

A stronger wave of sound rolled up. Again the patrol gong sounded. There was the clangor of an ambulance. From the saloon on the corner came confused shouts. Men and women screamed. People peered over the edges of the roofs, and



“I think I'll keep it awhile myself,” he said.

windows and fire-escapes became suddenly alive. The sounds became a roar.

Toomey, in a tingle of excitement, ran to the window, leaned far out, and excitedly shouted inquiries that nobody heeded or even heard. His wife and Duggan tugged at him in vain. McShea looked on in grim amusement.

Ambulance and patrol wagon went clangorously away. The crowd dispersed. The roar of sound died down. Toomey turned back into the room. Mrs. Toomey sat down, stupefied into silence. Duggan tried not to scowl. The eyes of the district leader twinkled. The almost defunct packer and weigher was for a moment disconcerted, but as he caught the twinkle in his district leader's eyes he braced himself with a grin.

"If you won't let me will my job, McShea, I think I'll keep it awhile myself," he said.

A BURIAL BY FRIENDLESS POST

A BURIAL BY FRIENDLESS POST

LEMUEL HALL, exhausted and almost unconscious, lay alone in his little room on the top floor of a rear tenement on Ludlow Street. His landlord, going to collect his pittance of rent, found him huddled in a corner, with the late rays of the afternoon sun shining upon him with dark obscurity through the dustily opaque glass of the small window.

The ambulance surgeon said that he was suffering from lack of food, and invigorated him with stimulants. Then Hall explained that he had been unable to earn any money for several weeks, as he was so feeble and so bent with rheumatism that nobody would employ him. He said that he had not tasted food for two days, and added, simply, that he had hoped death would come without his plight being discovered, as the thought of receiving charity was almost unbearable.

The landlord summoned a policeman and had Hall taken into custody on a charge of vagrancy. He told the officer that the man was penniless and down-hearted, and that he feared he would commit suicide. When taken the next morning to Essex Market Court, Hall weakly waited with the crowd of prisoners in the unventilated "pen," and when his name was called, he staggered out in front of the bar.

"Is that man drunk?" asked the magistrate, sharply.

"No, Your Honor, but I understand he's starving."

A hush fell upon the crowded, stuffy little court-room as the magistrate leaned over his desk and looked down at Hall, who tried, with pitiable ineffectuality, to stand erect and save his pride.

"He was arrested yesterday, after the adjournment of court, and there's no appropriation, you know, for the feeding of prisoners till they've been arraigned and formally remanded," continued the officer. "I didn't hear of his case until a few minutes ago. I understand that the ambu-

lance surgeon gave him stimulants, but that he hasn't had anything since."

"What is your business? Have you any family or friends?" said the magistrate, looking at Hall with kindly scrutiny.

"I—I used to be a machinist—but I can't get work at—at anything. I'm willing to sweep or shovel—but I'm rheumatic and stiff. I've no friends—"

The judge handed some money to one of the court officers. "Take this, and go out and get something strong and nourishing for the man," he said, with a brusqueness that was intended to hide the unjudicial character of the act. And at that a ragged fellow, who had just been fined a dollar for drunkenness, and who had stood, after paying his fine, to watch the man who had been found starving, stepped back to the bar and said :

"Judge, Your Honor, it wuz two dollars as I was expectin' to be foined, an' me woife sint in to me that same, an' now I'll take it koindly if you'll let me give this extry dollar to—"

But Hall interrupted him, hurriedly. "No, no. I thank you—but I can't take

your money." And a woman in a faded shawl and gown, and of an appearance that showed years of toil and hardship, pushed her way to the front, and with a look of set determination seized the would-be generous man by the arm, took the dollar from his hand, and pushed him unresistingly toward the door.

"Hall, I don't want to commit you to the Workhouse as a vagrant," said the magistrate, kindly. "I feel a sympathy with a man in your condition, for you are evidently intelligent, and you impress me as one who has done his best to make a living. I shall send you where you will be given medical care if you need it, and where you will always be warm and have plenty to eat. I shall see that you are temporarily strengthened before you leave this building, and then you will be taken to the Almshouse."

"Don't, don't make a pauper of me!" cried Hall. "Let me just creep away somewhere and die!" But the judge briefly ordered the next case to be called, and two officers removed the limp form of Hall to an ante-room. In the afternoon

he was taken to Blackwell's Island and entered as an inmate of the Almshouse.

From the first, in his new home, he was reserved and reticent. The garrulous curiosity of the old men who crept and hobbled about him and plied him with cunningly contrived questions as to his past resulted in very little, for of his past he would not speak, further than to say that he had once been fairly prosperous, and had had a family, but that now he had no money and his family were all dead. His comrades grumbled at his balking of their curiosity.

“What can we talk of, over here, if new-comers won't tell us all about themselves?” was the burden of their complaint. Yet, in spite of this, Hall soon made himself well liked.

Inflammatory rheumatism, complicated with complaints that had come through neglect and insufficient food, kept Hall a prisoner within his ward for a considerable part of the time, and frequently caused him excruciating pain, but he was always eager to be out as much as possible. Wearily walking, one day, toward a sunny corner

overlooking the East River and its swirling tide, he saw a couple of others hobbling toward the same spot, and, reaching it, he found a score of crippled and palsied and feeble men holding what seemed to be a meeting, with a blind man acting as chairman. Several of the men had but an arm apiece; others had lost a leg; all were weak or disabled. Dressed in the Alms-house suits, with cap and jacket and trousers of the same cheap cloth, which was neither a gray nor a brown, but an indistinguishable mixture of both, according as the wind and sun had weather-stained them, the men had anything but a military aspect; and yet there was something about them that told Hall that they were meeting as old soldiers.

He hobbled away, feeling that he ought not to intrude upon a private meeting, but his curiosity was great in regard to what he had seen, and he soon learned that he had come upon a meeting of Friendless Post, which met, in some part of the grounds or in a corner of one of the buildings, almost daily. Most frequently, they met at the spot where he had come upon them. He

was pained to learn that, among the twenty-eight hundred inmates of the pauper institution, were thus a score or so of men who had helped to fight the battles of their country.

The men were not a part of the Grand Army of the Republic. It never occurred to them that they could be admitted, and, indeed, they would have shrunk from asking for recognition as a pauper Post. The name of Friendless Post had been given them by a newspaper man, and had been at once adopted by the veterans themselves and all on the Island. They once a year elected a leader, and William Morrison, a blind man, was now serving his second term.

Gradually, Hall became acquainted with a few of the members; and, introducing



the subject of their war experiences, found that with the slightest encouragement they became interminably garrulous. By showing himself a good listener he aroused a strong friendship in the breasts of the withered old fellows; and so, one day, as he again went by apparent chance near the spot where the veterans were meeting, he was greeted with shrill and crackly cries of welcome.

“Come over here! Sit down and talk with us! We’ll tell you all about the war!”

Hall limped over to them, and after punctiliously formal introductions got down, with squirms of pain—for his rheumatism was quite bad that day—on one of the planks beside them. Three of the most helpless, who had been carried to the spot by their comrades, occupied a bench together. A couple of other benches, for the more feeble, served—with a few planks and the grass itself—for seats for the rest of the Post. The men were vying with each other in tales of various campaigns, and although the stories had been told dozens of times they were listened to at-

tentively, for each man knew that the only way to secure attention for himself, when he came to tell his own oft-repeated tales of camp and march and battle, was to show interest in the adventures of the others.

Frequently, after that, did Hall join the garrulous gathering, and he always listened with close attention. Sometimes the old fellows condoled with him that he had not been able to be a soldier himself, and he always responded that it would indeed have been something to be proud of. And one day, when old Jube Marriott was telling a prosing tale, he could not recollect the name of the river just north of Allatoona Pass, and stammeringly hesitated in his story.

“The Etowah,” said Hall. “The river that Johnston didn’t want to cross till he could fight Sherman’s left wing at Cassville, you know.”

A silence fell upon the group, and Marriott was too much taken by surprise to continue his tale. “I didn’t know you’d ever been in Georgia,” he said.

“Oh, yes,” said Hall, looking with em-

barrassment over the water, while he felt, rather than saw, the glances of amazement that the men exchanged. Within a few minutes he said that he would have to be going, and the others were still too surprised to make more than a half-hearted effort to detain him. Then they held a council of war, as they termed it, and after a deal of discussion and solemn supposition, Aleck Hanny said :

“Comrades, there ain’t but one explanation. This man Hall was a Confedrit, a Rebel, an’ that’s why he knows about these things, an’ it’s why he was always so blame careful not to let us think he knowed a thing.”

“Yes,” said the others. “Hall was a Confederate.”

“But,” said Blind Morrison, gently, “we must remember, comrades, that the war is over, and that each side thought itself right. Don’t let any of us treat him any different. We must have him meet with us just as he’s been doing. And we must not let him think we have discovered his secret, for that would probably keep him away from us, and I am sure, from the

sound of his voice when I have heard him speak, that he has enjoyed being with us. Let us be brave soldiers, and do nothing that would seem to be still fighting him."

It was not only that the veterans always listened to their blind leader with respect, but that in this case his words also appealed to their rough sense of chivalry, and so, when Hall absented himself for several days from the meetings, Hanny and Marriott sought him out, told him they all missed him, and the three hobbled and limped together to the meeting-place. There, however, although the veterans, by dint of intense self-control, refrained from asking direct questions as to Hall's army life, they could not keep from hovering on the verge of the forbidden ground by forming inquiries in regard to distances, places, and campaigns in the South, and whenever Hall answered the questions, which they put to him with a labored effort to be natural, they furtively exchanged glances of intelligence. "I have been in the South, and of course know a good deal about it," he said, lamely.

For a week the old soldiers were able to keep from letting Hall know of their discovery, but they made up for their self-denial by prosing endlessly on the subject in their own wards and when Hall was not with them. And one day slow-witted Fred Ohlens blurted out, but from ignorance rather than design:

“Don’t you Rebs feel that it was best, after all, for us Unions to have whipped you?”

“What!” exclaimed Hall. “Did you take me for a Confederate?” He gasped, and looked around the group, and saw that every man was indeed of that opinion. “I was not a Confederate! No! I was——” But he stopped, twisted himself as nearly erect as his rheumatism, which had of late been growing worse, would permit, and went slowly away, with not a single voice to call him back.

“Then he must have been a deserter!” That was the stern verdict rendered against him, and not even Blind Morrison had a word to say in his defence.

Hall did not reappear at the meetings, nor did any member of Friendless Post

suggest that he be sent for. He was often spoken of, and, taking their tone from Morrison, the men gradually came to refer to him with pity, although not one would have consented that he again meet with them. For two weeks none saw him, for his ward was quite a distance from those of the members of the Post, and there was nothing strange, amid the great population and the various buildings of the institution, that a man should for many days chance not to be seen. But one day Marriott had news.

“ Lemuel Hall’s in the hospital ward. He hasn’t been out of bed for a week, and the doctor says he’s dying.” A silence fell upon the group. “ Comrade Hanny,” said Morrison, at length, “ will you please lead me to the sick ward ? ”

Hanny was semi-paralyzed and had but one leg, but he had long been a close friend of Morrison’s, and was almost always the one who acted as the blind man’s guide. Friendless Post watched in silence as the two companions started, arm in arm, toward the building to which the sick man had been taken. The doorkeeper allowed

them to pass, and they went haltingly down the cot-lined aisle, with hollow-eyed men intently watching them. Lemuel Hall saw them coming, and a light of eagerness came into his eyes.

“Comrade—for you were our comrade once,” said Morrison, “is there anything we can do for you?”

“No. But it is good of you to come. Otherwise, I should have died without a friend to speak to me.” He was very feeble, and his words came with difficulty.

“And I wanted you to know,” went on Morrison, clumsily striving to ease the dying man’s mind, “that all of us feel sure that, whatever your reason was for—for leaving the army as you did, you must have had some very strong temptation—I mean that all of us think you were an honest soldier at heart, and wouldn’t act so again if you had it to do over—and if another old soldier, who gave his own eyesight for his country, can do or say anything that will help you, he wants to do it.”

Hall’s face grew very white. “They think me a deserter,” he whispered, but more to himself than to them. Then he

feeble tried, but in vain, to get his stiffened hand into his bosom.

“There’s a paper there; take it,” he gasped. “I had thought that I would die with it, and ask the nurse to tell no one about it, but—just have it buried with me. I—I—it was my pride. I was too proud to say, when I was a pauper, that I had been a soldier. It—was a mistake—but I didn’t wan’t to—disgrace—the old flag.”

He choked, and seemed very weary. Morrison gently felt in his bosom, and drew forth a folded paper. He knew what it must be, but he passed it to Hanny to read. And Hanny, with his old eyes watery from emotion as well as from age, spelled slowly out, word by word, in an awed and hushed tone, while Hall lay very silent and with a look of serene peace upon his face, the document that formally certified that Lemuel Hall had been a member of the Eighty-seventh Pennsylvania Regiment, from the outbreak of the Civil War until his honorable discharge at its very close.

He concluded, but Hall lay very still,

and with that same look of peaceful serenity upon his face. "Comrade, we misunderstood you," said Morrison. "You were a brave man."

Hall did not reply. His expression did not change. Hanny cleared his misty eyes and, looking closely at the still face, uttered a low cry. Morrison bent swiftly forward and laid his hand on Lemuel Hall's heart, but there was no responsive beat. A nurse was summoned, and she gently laid a white cloth over the dead man's face.

The next day a group of men, gray and withered, dodderingly stumbled from the Protestant chapel, bearing between them a cheap coffin, covered with an American flag. The faces of the men were solemn with importance, and also from a sense of pride in the burden that they bore. One of the Almshouse clerks stepped forward to save the coffin from a threatened fall, but they refused his aid as if he had tried to steady the Ark of the Covenant. The bearers were six, and all had the stooping, halting listlessness, that comes from weakness, and from day after day of nothing for

the hands to do and almost nothing to occupy the mind.

Behind them came the firing-squad; six more men, each of whom carried a gun, and each of whom wore a long blue over-coat, such as were worn by inmates sent on errands, in winter-time; and which, on occasions like the present, were privileged to answer for military coats. Behind the firing-squad, who awkwardly formed on either side of the bearers in the little sunny spot beside the chapel, came another shrivelled and wrinkled few, rubbing their feeble eyes as they emerged from the gloom of the interior into the bright sunlight.

It was a proud privilege of the handful of old soldiers to bury, with military ceremony, such of their number as died on the Island, and thus it was that Lemuel Hall was to be honored in death so far as Friendless Post could honor him.

“Attention!” cried William Morrison, who, most erect of the entire group, stood with bared head and shoulders thrown back, and a look of grave earnestness upon his face. He knew that the men were ready, for the shambling, stumbling shuffle

of the veterans had ceased, the guns had been awkwardly dropped at rest, and he had heard the butts strike the ground, while a little chorus of coughing and of clearing of throats, which was quite involuntary on the part of the old fellows, bore testimony to their self-consciousness and also to the fact that they were waiting for the start.

“Forward, march!” cried Morrison, and away from the chapel and down the roadway, shaded from the heat of the sun by overhanging branches, the shambling, quavering procession went. Beside them the swift tide swept and gurgled, and upon the surface of the roughened East River the sunlight resplendently glistened.

Profoundly wrapped up in the sense of playing an important part, the veterans were oblivious to the fact that the ceremony they were performing was attracting but little appreciative attention. Groups of Almshouse inmates stood and watched them pass; some, indeed, with admiration at so brave a show, but most with careless indifference. A few employees and guards also watched them, and some even

smiled at the poor old fellows' clumsiness, while on the faces of but very few was there any expression of interest or sympathy.

Blind Morrison marched bravely at the head of the desolate group, with Aleck Hanny awkwardly stumping along beside him, and now and then guiding him by a word or touch. The firing squad, proudest and most self-conscious of the party, strutted pitifully, stiff with wounds and feebleness and rheumatism, holding their guns in erratically varied positions, and unconsciously shifting them, to ease their hands and shoulders, as they marched, and thus pointing the muzzles in eccentrically new directions. But the guns were not loaded. The blank cartridges that were to be fired were not to be put in till the squad should stand beside the grave, for otherwise there would have been six individual salutes, accidentally fired at startlingly unexpected intervals, before the firing party had gotten a hundred yards from the chapel.

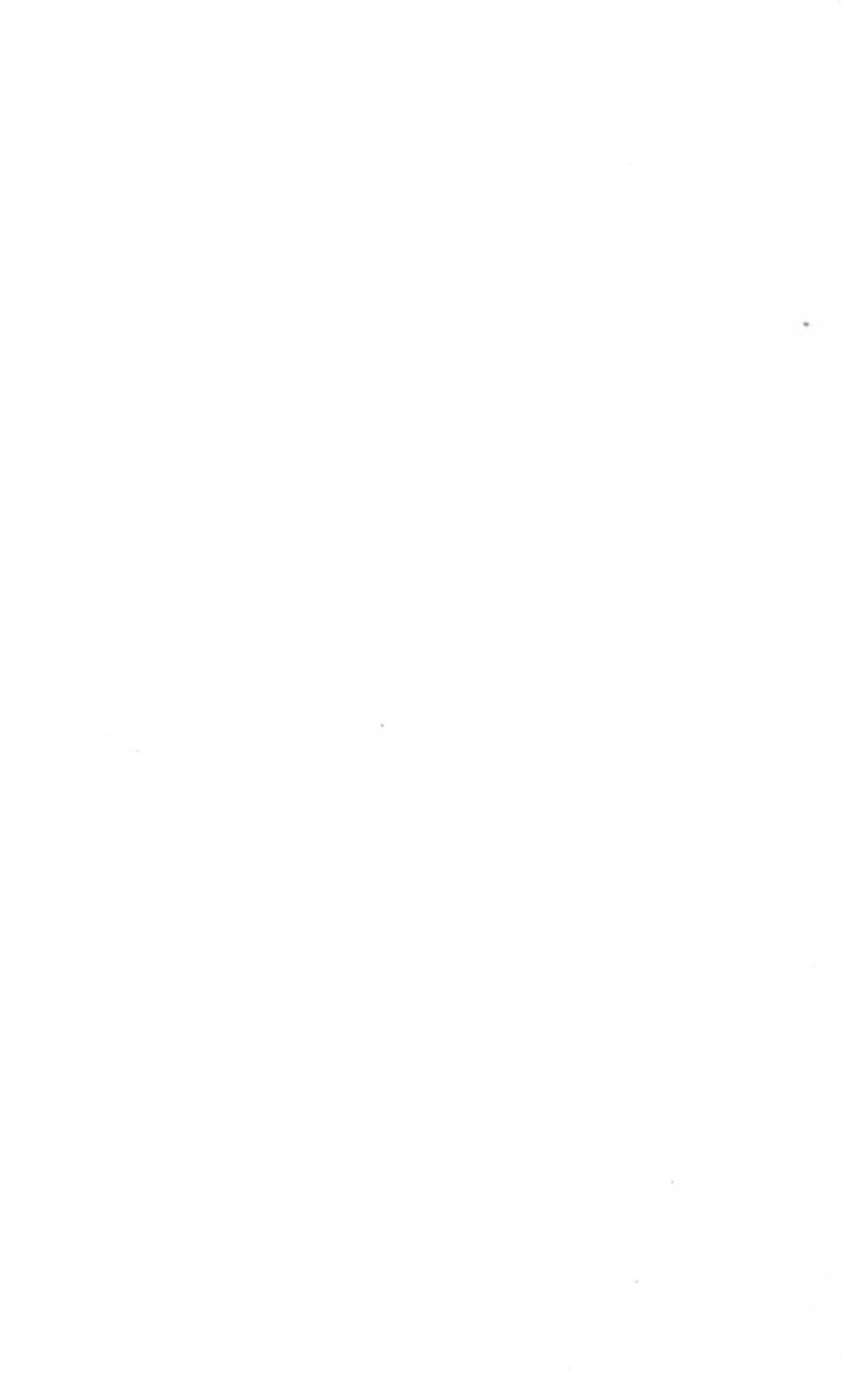
The coffin bearers grew red in the face and staggered weakly, but none asked to be relieved of the burden of which all were

so proud. A few of the old soldiers, too crippled or feeble to accompany the funeral party, looked after the little procession with wistful longing. Some, too, of the regular Almshouse inmates, in addition to those who stood in groups along the roadway, looked lazily after the veterans from the windows of their wards or from doorways, but the majority of the hundreds of men and women who made their home there were absolutely uninterested, and sat unmoved upon the benches, or lay sprawled upon the grass, sluggishly gazing, as was their occupation for hour after hour and day after day, at the hurrying tide and the passing boats, in dormant apathy.

At the storehouse dock lay the steamer that had just unloaded its morning cargo of criminals, paupers and sick, for the public hospitals, the Almshouse, and the penal institutions of that island of varied misery. The captain was impatient, for he saw that the shambling old fellows were proceeding very slowly. They were not only desirous to prolong the glory of their march, but hoped also that they would not reach the



A few of the old soldiers . . . looked after the little procession.



dock with their dead comrade till the criminals had been marched away. Yet they did not dare actually to loiter, for they knew, from previous experience, how harshly they would be berated for such temerity. They had once been told, indeed, that they ought to have the privilege of soldiers' funerals taken away from them for actually presuming to compel the boat to wait four minutes. To-day they had underestimated, a little, the time within which the boat would be ready for them.

“Hurry up there! What are you so slow about?” cried the captain, roughly, and Blind Morrison, in his eagerness to respond, tripped over a stone, and would have fallen had not Hanny quickly caught him. The entire party then increased their pace, while the mate, obedient to the captain's command, ran out to meet them and hurry them along. It was with a cowed and humble air that the veterans reached the dock, and shuffled, without order, aboard the steamer. A line of Workhouse prisoners, about to march off in custody of their guards, forgot their own plight and jeered at the discomfited men, while the

fifteen convicts who formed the crew of the steamer grinned appreciatively in return.

“Step lively, there! Just take that up in front with the other bodies!”

Friendless Post went to the forward end of the boat, bearing the body with them, but they did not put it down beside the other coffins that were there piled up, for the others held pauper bodies from the Morgue, that were to be given burial in Potter’s Field, while it was the pride of Friendless Post that the soldier dead escaped that fate, one of the G. A. R. Posts, of New York, having purchased a plot of ground on Hart’s Island, near, indeed, to the Potter’s Field, yet entirely separate from it, and given it to the veterans of the Almshouse for use as a soldiers’ cemetery.

To that dreary island, in Long Island Sound, where New York City annually buries over two thousand pauper or unknown dead, the steamer puffed its leisurely way, and the soldiers were hurried ashore with their burden. At the little plot of land where, though paupers in life,

they could at least lie in free soil in death, the company took on an aspect of curious dignity, and even the mate, who had gone after them to hurry their proceedings, took off his hat as he neared them and stood silent as he watched.

A friendly keeper, who had accompanied the party, loaded the muskets, the tottering firing-squad lined up beside the open grave, and the service for the dead was slowly monotoned. Blind Morrison, whose arm was held tight by Hanny to keep him from stumbling into the open grave, stood sombrely bowed, and tears crept down his wrinkled cheeks. The chaplain concluded the brief service. The firing-squad, with a reawakening of self-conscious glory, braced themselves with tense importance, and Hanny whispered to Morrison when all was ready.

“Fire!” said Morrison, loudly.

There came a scattering response, for the old and palsied fingers were too much affected by the nervousness of the supreme moment to give a concerted volley. Pointed down, or up, or toward either side, the guns flashed out their salute over the grave

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of the dead soldier, and Morrison stood in stiff rigidity till the sixth shot had sounded. Then, spurred on by the mate, and without semblance of order, Friendless Post shambled stragglingly back to the boat.

OVER THE RIVER FROM BLACK-
WELL'S



OVER THE RIVER FROM BLACK- WELL'S

THE deaf man who once in a while went over to the blind men's ward, in the Almshouse, to read the papers aloud, was slowly plodding through the task.

He had no judgment in regard to his reading. He was, indeed, barely more than able to read at all. He would begin at the top of a column, at random, anywhere in the paper, and read slowly through to the bottom, taking in everything impartially. Whether the columns were of editorial matter, or advertisements, or home news, or foreign despatches, he did not care.

His reading to the blind men was largely from kindness of heart, and largely from vanity.

"They're so glad to have me do it," he would say. "And they don't get up and

walk away, and they don't come and read over my shoulder if I'm getting along a little slow, and they don't bother me with questions. Or if they do, I don't hear them," he would add, with a grin.

He was, indeed, almost totally deaf. To-day he had read the advertisements of half a dozen dry-goods houses, and had then begun the description of a half-page picture.

"I guess it's another advertisement," he said, after looking at it for some moments in doubt. "Probably a new style of pants or hat is coming in fashion. It shows a tall man, pretty thin, with a big hat on, and pants that's tied under his shoes to keep them from slipping off. One foot's on a place with the name 'Cuba' on, and the other's touching Phil—Philip Pines. And he's a-straddling all over the United States to get to Philip. Guess it means the things will be good to use in all kinds of places, but I don't see the name of any store."

Blind Morrison punched him gently with his stick. "It's meant for Uncle Sam!" he shouted.



"I guess it's another advertisement," he said.

"Hey?" said the deaf man.

"It's meant for Uncle Sam!" And then Morrison put his lips against one ear, and another of the blind men put his lips to the other, and they shouted in unison.

"It's Uncle Sam!"

The deaf man was irritated. He caught only the last word.

"Sam?" he said, querulously. "Sam, do you say? What's his other name? And how do you happen to be so sure about it? Hey?"

The blind men humbly bent their heads, just like men who can see. The deaf reader glanced back at the page, and sniffed angrily.

"It says Philip, here, anyhow, and there ain't any Sam! And who's reading this paper? Is it me or you? That's what I'd like to know!"

Half a dozen of the men gently tapped him with their sticks, in a way that he knew meant an appeal for patience, and after several minutes of sniffing, and of grumbling threats never to read again to them, while the poor fellows listened in dread, he resumed his task, and began an

account of the bringing back, to New York, of the bodies of those members of one of the local regiments who had been killed in the war in Cuba.

“The — bodies — of — the—dead—soldiers—will — arrive — at — New—York—on—Sunday—and—will — be—escorted— to—the—armory—by—the—regiment—”

Morrison listened with absorbed attention. While the struggle in Cuba had been in progress he had never been able to feel much interest in it. As a veteran of the Civil War, and the informal leader of the handful of old soldiers who lived at the Almshouse, he had underrated the war with Spain, with its little armies, its few fights, none of which, in his mind, attained to the dignity of a battle, and its small losses.

But of late his ideas had gradually changed. He had come to somewhat of an understanding of the significance of the struggle, somewhat of a realization of the world-wide importance of the conquests that his nation had made.

And so Morrison’s admiration for the New Army and Navy had steadily grown :

but he thought of it all as the "Army," that word covering both services, to his mind. He regretted that he had so long belittled and ignored the war, and felt that he must now, as an old veteran and the leader of Friendless Post, make all the amends in his power. He was beginning to grasp the meaning of the word "Expansion."

The reader droned slowly on. "The—line—of—march—will—be—up—Broad—way— and — Fifth — avenue. At—the—armory — the — bodies — will — lie — in — state."

An idea flashed suddenly upon Morrison's mind. Would it not be a proud privilege for him to be present at Sunday's ceremony? Was it not a solemn duty as well? All of his neglect and indifference were forgotten. The desire to do honor to the soldiers of the New Army surged over him like a wave.

The deaf man went ploddingly on, and, as he read, Morrison was picturing to himself the death of the soldiers from fever and bullets on the Cuban hills. He was thinking of the continued struggle of the

regiments in the jungles and swamps of the Philippines. And he thought of the banks of the Chattahoochee, the sweep of the army through the rice swamps of the Carolinas. Yes, it was all the same. These men of the New Army were risking their lives just as he and his comrades had done in the years that were gone.

He listened till the last word of the account was read. The deaf man next gave the description of a big fire, went from that to a political meeting, read a humorous account of a runaway, and finished the page with a medley of advertisements. But of all this Morrison heard nothing. His mind was filled with thoughts of the glory of the New Army ; of the honor paid to the flag abroad ; of how the world had awakened to new respect for the strength of the Republic, as displayed in the Spanish War.

The reading at length concluded, and the paper folded up with noisy crinklings, the deaf man coughed and hemmed till he had been thanked over and over again. He beamed upon the humble men. He bristled with importance.

"It's a great good thing to be able to read," he said. He was thinking only of his own abilities and advantages. He did not mean to hurt the blind men. And, indeed, they were so accustomed to scorn and carelessness that the feelings of most of them had become well calloused.

Morrison tapped his way from ward to ward to find his friend and comrade, Aleck Hanny.

"Oh, man! It's all come over me with a rush! There's a funeral on Sunday—a funeral of the New Army!"

"In New York—and will there be marching?" asked Hanny.

"Yes. They'll march. And it's dead soldiers brought home from Cuba. And I must go, Hanny! I must go! You'll go with me, Hanny?"

From its tone of excitement, the voice had sunk to a pitifully pleading sound. "You'll go with me, Hanny?" And Hanny comforted him.

"Yes, yes. I'll go. Of course I'll go. Did I ever desert you, Morrison?"

"No. You've been a good friend; but

I wanted to go so much, and I was afraid that maybe——”

“Yes, yes. Of course. But now you know it’ll be all right,” said Hanny, still speaking very soothingly.

“Will there be any trouble about our getting passes to go ashore on Sunday, do you think?” asked Morrison, with a new touch of fear.

“Oh, no,” replied Hanny. “We’ll get them easy enough.”

“Let’s go and get them now,” insisted Morrison. “Maybe there will be so many ask for that day that they won’t let us.”

So the two went together to the office, and the desired passes were given them. Not till the coveted bit of paper was actually in Morrison’s fingers did the fear that he might be disappointed vanish.

His eagerness to be with the New Army grew steadily more intense. His being blind locked his emotions into narrower channels, but this alone was far from explaining the intensity of his desire. He talked of nothing but the war with Spain and in the Philippines. “Seems as if

Morrison has just heard that there's been some fighting," was the general comment.

He sat by the water-side with Hanny, and a few other members of Friendless Post, as the veterans were called, and they sang old war-songs and cheered each passing ship. The others caught the infection of excitement from the blind man. When meal-time came, Morrison let himself be led to join the waiting men, where scores stood patiently in line while other scores ate; but when his turn at the table came he could scarcely swallow anything. He was too excited to be hungry, and the thick soup, the lumps of meat, the cheap, thin tea, were tasteless to him. He thought only of the New Army.

Night came, but he could not sleep. He, usually so quiet and self-controlled, tossed and tumbled on his narrow cot, in the big bare ward. He sang army songs, and even tried to give vocalic utterance to a funeral dirge, from what he remembered of how a band had played it, years before. At this, even the long-suffering of his blind companions gave way, and a sleepy keeper cursed him till he lay still.

The keeper reported him, the next day, for disorder in his ward, and as a punishment his leave of absence was revoked. When Hanny learned of this he was deeply indignant, and stumped off to expostulate, but his interference resulted only in the revocation of his own leave as well.

The men were terribly disappointed; Morrison, from a sense of personal loss which he would have been quite unable to explain, and Hanny from his sense of loyalty to Morrison and his appreciation of his comrade's distress. Morrison's enthusiasm had changed to sombre bitterness.

"I'd risk my life to go over there," he said, at length, in half-aloud soliloquy. For several minutes, Hanny did not respond. The remark of Morrison was crystallizing in his mind an idea that already had taken shape there. Yet he hesitated about expressing it, and when he did his voice quivered a little, although he tried to make it big and strong.

"Let's go over, anyhow," he said.

"Go over! What do you mean? How can we do it?" cried Morrison.

"Float!" was Hanny's laconic reply.

"But I'm blind, and you're paralyzed and got only one leg!"

"We'll do it!" said Hanny, his voice getting every moment braver. "Friendless Post never had as good a leader as you, and, besides that—well, I feel if there's anything I can do for you, I'm ready to do it. And I'm not the only old soldier here that feels the same way, though maybe you never suspected it. We can get away. We'll make a raft. We're trusted, you know, to go around pretty free, an' after supper we'll come back here, an' fix it up. I've got it all planned."

After supper, Hanny led Morrison out from the buildings, instead of taking him, as usual, to the blind ward, and so contrived it that they were able to keep out of sight of the guards till nightfall. The discipline is not strict there, as such a thing as an escape from the Almshouse is not looked for. A guard, indeed, did come upon the two fellows, but they sat very quiet, and he contented himself with gruffly ordering them to go to their wards.

With eager haste Hanny worked to make a simple raft. Two boards, about

fifteen feet in length, that had carelessly been left by carpenters, after a repair job, and which had been carried here by Friendless Post to serve as seats, were dragged to the edge of the river, and bound together with stout cord that Hanny had secured on the plea of needing it for repairs to his cot.

Morrison was exhilarated. He was eager to help Hanny push and tug. When forced to wait, idly, while Hanny worked, he was in a fever of impatience. The cool night-wind struck his face, and his spirit exulted. A dash of rain came, but he barely noticed it. When the raft was ready, together they lifted it to the very edge of the retaining wall, and one end was dropped into the water with a splash. Another moment, and the entire raft was in, and held against the wall by the exertion of all of Hanny's strength, as he leaned down to it, and the dark water tugged and strained.

"Now, Morrison, quick! Get down, and fix yourself at that end! Twist your legs under the boards, and hold tight!"

Morrison showed an alert certainty in

his movements that was astonishing. He crept over the edge like a cat, and felt his way to his place. "I'm ready," he said.

"Here—take this piece of wood. You can paddle with it, and change sides as I tell you. I've got another like it for this end. Don't get washed off—and here goes! An' if it's good-by for us—well, good-by!"

He gave the raft a vigorous push toward mid-stream. The raft heaved and swayed. Before the middle of the river was reached the current was on them in almost its full strength, and every moment it grew worse, for the tide was changing. Blackwell's Island is but a little below Hell Gate, and the river boils and whirls in fury.

For a while the men paddled frantically, but soon they flung the pieces of wood aside and twisted their arms about the raft. They clung in desperation. Toward the Metropolitan Hospital they were carried by an eddying current, and now Morrison's end was the front, and now Hannay's, while the next moment the raft would float broadside or circle round and round. A fiercer current bore them back.

The river churned more wildly. The waves washed over the men, deluging and almost choking them. The white caps of the waves were tossed into their faces in showers.

A big steamer, with its decks crowded with passengers, swept by, and they heard the music of a band and the laughter of the men and women. They cried out together, but their hoarse wail was unheard. The swell of the steamer piled the waves still higher. The long boards dipped and swung in vicious jerks, for the current was not only swift but full of whirls and eddies, and again great waves rolled over the men and again they choked for breath as they emerged.

Another steamer passed, and Hanny gave a cry. "I'm off!" he screamed. For the tugging current had finally so benumbed his arms that he could barely clasp the boards; and an eddying wrench, that came with the strength as of hands of steel, had dragged him from his hold.

Morrison heard him, and grappled for him with a desperate grasp. The swirling boards swung the two men together, and

with a cry of joy the blind man seized his friend and dragged him back to the raft. The cords parted. The heaving waves threw one board upon the other. But the wiry strength of Morrison exerted itself in a supreme effort, and his legs and arms took the place of cords, and held the boards together for a few moments till Hanny, his own strength restored by the imminence of his peril, also grasped them round about with his arms.

From the first Hanny had been distractedly praying, and vowing all sorts of vows if his life would but be spared, and now the vowing and the praying recommenced. Between his prayers he shouted encouragement to his companion, but Morrison was very silent and scarcely spoke.

Below Blackwell's Island the raft was swiftly spun close to the Long Island City shore, and the violence of the current rapidly disappeared. Hanny tried to get his bearings. He saw the smoke and the light of mills and refineries. A great glare shot up from a chimney, and for a few moments he saw a wide expanse of water, and the lines of docks, and great

ferry-boats, and the outlines of the huge buildings on the Island, that they were fast leaving behind them. A period of relief followed. The current grew less and less rapid. The raft was carried diagonally across the river, toward the New York side. Opposite Twenty-third street a ferry-boat almost ran into it. The men called out, and a deck-hand heard them and peered over the edge. Probably, however, he did not see them. They were too tired, and too much overcome by the reaction after the strain of deadly peril, to call out again, although several other boats passed close to them. As they neared the rounding point at Grand Street, Hanny saw that they were gradually nearing shore. His energy reawoke.

“Paddle with your arms, Morrison! I’ll kick with my leg and steer with my crutch!” he cried.

Until now, his crutch had been tightly bound at his side, he having taken this precaution before embarking on the raft at the Island. The boards were slowly propelled into a slip. The tide was high, and Hanny looked for a spot where they could

most easily clamber to the top of the dock. The blind man went up first. Then he turned and reached for his companion's arm. Hanny, almost exhausted, was drawn up, and the two men sat there shivering and trembling, now that the danger was past.

Morrison was the first to realize the necessity of moving. The dock was black and deserted. But they went toward the nearest lights, and in a few minutes Hanny learned where they were. He had a little money, saved from a small sum a relative had sent him, and he was generously willing to spend it. He led Morrison to where they could get a warming drink. The saloon-keeper looked at them in surprise, but asked no questions. They went to a fifteen-cent Bowery lodging-house, leaving a dripping trail along the sidewalks, and both were so fatigued that they were soon asleep, in spite of the hardness of their bunks and the turmoil of their thoughts.

The forenoon of the next day they spent at the dingy public room of the lodging-house, only going out to get breakfast at a St. Andrew's stand. They had a bun and

a cup of coffee apiece, and Hanny paid four cents in all. At noon, at the same stand, they each drank two cups of coffee, and each of them also ate two buns and a dish of pork and beans. For this, Hanny paid ten cents. Then the men went slowly to Washington Square and sat down on a bench in the shadow of Washington Arch.

“We’re by an arch made by the man who made the Declaration of Independence,” said Hanny. “He’s the man that made us all free, you know.”

Morrison did not notice the shuffle and murmur of the gathering crowd, for his ears were strained to catch the first notes of the music of the New Army. The throng ranged itself along both sides of the road by which the procession would approach the Arch. At length the wailing funeral dirge struck Morrison’s ear. “They’re coming!” he cried; and groups about him turned toward him in surprise, so full of solemn joy was the sound of his words.

“Take my arm, Hanny.” And the two moved to the front of the line, for the people fell aside to give the old men place.

Morrison forgot his fatigue and stiffness. His old muscles grew very tense, and he stood very vigilant and straight. Hanny braced himself on his crutch, and stood as erect as he could beside him. The notes of the dirge grew louder and stronger, as the head of the procession left Broadway and moved across the Square.

A hush fell upon the spectators. Between throngs of bare-headed men, and women in whose eyes shone tears, the regiment slowly marched. Morrison stood rigidly at salute. "The Dead March from Saul" sounded solemnly. A few people looked wonderingly at the weeping blind man.

"The New Army!" he whispered.
"The New Army!"

"Many of 'em's yellow-faced, and many's peaked and thin," said Hanny.

"Yes, yes," said Morrison. "And when any of them come to the Island, Friendless Post will be proud of them, and make them welcome."

Into Fifth Avenue the regiment turned. The band ceased. There was but the muffled beat of the drums, and as the line

passed on the sounds became inaudible, even to Morrison's ears. But he heard a beating that was more to him—the slow foot-falls of the soldiers, with now and then a gentle clink of steel. There was a break in the foot-falls, marking a gap in the line. A profounder silence fell upon the crowd.

"It's the colors!" whispered Morrison. "And they're draped in black! I know—I know!"

Another battalion followed, and then came the slow rumbling of wheels. "The coffins are on caissons," said Hanny.

"I hear them—I know—I know! And there are flags around them, too! Poor fellows—poor fellows! But arn't the people proud of them, Hanny? Arn't they proud?"

The last caisson rumbled by. Morrison and Hanny fell in hesitatingly, at the rear of the line. So slowly did the procession move that the blind man and the cripple could keep up with it. Fearful that at any moment a policeman might order them aside, but exulting with every step that they were allowed to follow, the old veterans passed under the Washington Arch,

and up the great avenue of wealth. It would have been easy to fancy that the blind man and the cripple were boding ghosts of the past, following ill-omenedly after the soldiers of the present, had it not been for the happiness that shone on Hanny's face and the rapt joy that transfigured Morrison's.

A great crowd was gathered at the regimental armory, and there, too, there was a profound silence, as the soldiers passed in and the caissons rumbled up to the entrance. Hanny had become bold. He led Morrison to the door. "We're old soldiers," he said.

The sentinel was thin and pale. The



campaign had left its marks on him. He looked at the old veterans, saluted, and let them pass. "I may come to that myself," he thought.

Morrison and Hanny sat on a pile of accoutrements at one side of the armory. Hanny looked on with a happiness that was largely owing to his being permitted to enter such a place while the public were still held at the door. Morrison listened to every sound with awed intentness, and was living over again the days of his own army life. The tramping of the soldiers over the great wooden floor, the low-voiced orders, and the clattering fall of the butts on the boards, thrilled through and through him. At length the doors were thrown open, and he listened to the soft shuffle of the people passing by, as the bodies lay in state.

One of the soldiers, recognizing that they were veterans, led the old fellows to the armory kitchen, and saw that they were fed. At length the time came that they dared stay no longer, and they left the armory and made their way to the ferry landing.

It was hours, that night, before the two men, tired though they were, could get to sleep. Their brains were in a whirl, and over and over again they revolved the events of the past two days.

“I’m proud of my country !” That was what Morrison most frequently whispered to himself, while the other blind men slept around him.

“I’m proud of my country ! I’m proud I’m an American ! I’m proud of the New Army ! And if a blind man’s life could help any, I’d be glad to give it.”

With a smile on his lips, he dropped off into a doze, but in a little while awoke again, his mind still in a tumult of excitement and joy.

“Hurrah for America !” he exclaimed, aloud, before he realized where he was.

“Silence in the ward, there !” growled the sleepy attendant.

A POLICE COURT EPISODE

A POLICE COURT EPISODE

IT was in one of the New York police courts, and it was as if the little waif had dropped in from another world to look upon the city's sin and misery, which flowed through the court in a stream of wretched humanity. The boy was eight years old, and for three years had lived with the Shakers of Canaan Four Corners. His mother, who had left him there, had recently written, begging that he be returned to her, and the good Shakers had, with some misgivings, complied. The elders had bidden him a grave good-by, the sisters had cried over him a little, and the few children of the little settlement had looked on in round-eyed wonder, as their playmate in the solemn games of the quiet place set forth on his journey into the strange world of which they had heard the brethren and sisters speak with such awe and fear.

The boy's mother wrote that she would be at the Grand Central Station to meet him, but she was not there, and after some hours of futile waiting, he was taken in charge by a policeman, and delivered to the care of a children's society, who in turn sent him to the court, for the formal orders of the magistrate. The little fellow sat between the officer of the society and a reporter, and from time to time he spoke of his life at the Shaker village, and told his companions how the scenes enacted before his eyes in the court appeared to him. His voice was soft, and his features were refined. He was dressed in a neat suit of gray, of Shaker cut.

"Eldress Marion made it for me," he said ; and his eyes brightened as he spoke of her. "But everyone at the Shaker village is always well dressed," he added, looking in a puzzled way at the rags and filth of a couple of prisoners, who at that moment were led to the bar. "I—I think I don't quite understand it. Don't the sisters see to mending clothes here?"

His face again brightened as he spoke of the house in which he lived. "A house

as big as this! But there aren't as many brethren and sisters there as there are in this one room. And the men and the women never walk away touching each other, as they do here. I never saw even an elder take hold of a sister's arm. And they never go down the same stairs," he added, as he watched a policeman lead a woman to the prison stairway.

A girl in tawdry finery walked to the bar, and wept, and hung her head, ringed in, as she was, by a row of pitiless eyes, that regarded her without a touch of sympathy. The boy looked on with pained wonder. The sharp voice of the judge, the clamor of frequent disputes between prisoners and witnesses, the buzzing, droning undertone of sound, the close, foul air, all troubled him. But he was happy again, as he told how, on the top of each great Shaker building, is a little tower with a big bell, and how the people gather when they hear the clanging strokes. His voice had a touch of awe as he spoke of the religious services, and described how, in swaying lines, the brethren and sisters moved about the room, gather-

ing a blessing in their upturned palms, and how they sweetly sang together—

But he quivered and stopped, as from the “pen,” just out of sight, came the drunken song of a woman. His eyes filled with tears, he stirred restlessly, and his voice faltered, as he asked, as he had asked before, where we thought his mother was, and why she had not come to meet him. We got him to talk about her and to tell us how she looked. She was pretty, he said, and did not dress at all like the sisters of the Shaker community. He remembered that she used to cry a good deal, and sometimes she would sing to him to get him to sleep; “and sometimes there were tears in her voice, and then I would cry; and then she would pick me up in her arms, and kiss me, and try to make me happy again. And once in a while there was singing or quarrelling in the next room, after mother had left me, thinking I was asleep, but I did not like that singing so much.”

The drunken song stopped, to be succeeded by drunken yells; and the boy shuddered. But the cries soon ceased,

and he was led to speak again of the pleasant life at the Shaker settlement. He told of the great fields of grain, and how he used to trudge after the reapers. "And there were eight calves, and a big black heifer, too!" He forgot the misery and sin about him, and his face was eagerly aglow. "And you just go to Bridge Hill, and you see a white gate; and it was at that gate that I saw mother for the last time, when she went away after leaving me with the good folks."

The drunken woman who had been singing was led into the court, and with shambling jauntiness stepped to the bar. Her dress, although of good quality, was draggily, and it was clear that she had been in the gutter. She leered knowingly at the judge. The boy's hand spasmodically clutched the reporter's arm. The little fellow was gasping convulsively.

"Mother!" he screamed.

The woman turned toward him. For a moment she was dazed, and then, like a flash, full comprehension came to her. Her face grew horribly white and drawn.

"My God!" she cried.

THE EXPERIMENT OF FREDERICA

THE EXPERIMENT OF FREDERICA

FREDERICA BLUHME was twelve years old before she saw actual darkness. Then it frightened her, being so unexpected, and she cried out in fear.

She had been reared on the teeming East Side. The rooms, on the top floor of the big tenement, just off Grand Street, were four in number and small. The tenement was one story higher than its immediate neighbors, and at all hours of the night the uncurtained windows of the Bluhmes' rooms looked forth upon a certain degree of brightness. From every side there was the glow of lamps or gas or electricity. The street was brilliant; the court-yard, with a little light on a pole, was but murkily half-shadowed; from the side windows, there was a bright glow in the air; the hall was dimly lit throughout the night.

Thus it came about that Frederica had never seen the full black of night. When she first saw it, it was at a Fresh Air Home in the Croton River country at the northern edge of Westchester County, and she had keenly enjoyed the day to which the dark night shut in with such a sombre finish. She had at times in the past been taken to Central Park or the Bronx ; once her parents had even taken her and her two brothers on an outing for a day into New Jersey ; but of the real country she had known nothing.

As an attendant at a Sunday school whose managers were interested in a fresh-air movement, and as a child of parents who, though not poor, did not feel able to send their children to the country to board during part of the hot weather, Frederica was chosen as one of the hundreds of fortunate ones to be sent to the Home. The first day was a wild delight. There was the excitement of going to the train, then the long railroad ride of an hour and a half—a ride that she hoped would never end, so filled with amazement was she, as mile after mile slipped by. She had

never supposed there was so much country.

Then came the entrancing ride in the big 'bus, with a score of other children, boys and girls, each one yelling at the top of his voice; and then the getting out at the huge building of the Home; and the big dinner, and the hours of frantically dashing across fields, and wading in the brook, and climbing trees, and gathering armfuls of weeds and grasses and flowers; and then, all wearied and out of breath, the answering rush to the supper call of the big bell, and then prayers and bed.

Frederica's bed was a narrow cot, close to a window, and the girl, tired though she was, did not immediately fall asleep. The lights were extinguished, but for a while, outside of the window, there was the shadowy after-glow of the day. Frederica crept to the window, leaned with her arms on the sill, and looked out. The glow faded into a beautiful dimness, her tired little head dropped on her arms, and she fell asleep.

When she woke it was with a start, and she felt sore and stiff. There was a pitchy

darkness. It was one of those black nights in which the hand cannot be seen an inch in front of the face. And not only was there the awful darkness. The air was filled with sounds for which her New York life had not prepared her. There were the chirring of crickets, the croaking of multitudinous frogs, the sawing note of the katydids, the hoarse cry of the tree-toad, the malignant note of the screech-owl.

To Frederica it was all a frightful nightmare. She shudderingly drew back from the window, and then her fear found voice in screams. The matron came and soothed her, and made a light, and talked with her, but it was not till morning that the little girl was fully composed.

In spite of the fright, the second day brought a renewal of the joys of the country. The trees, the running water, the wild freedom of it all, the apples actually growing on the trees! And the feeding of chickens, and the milking! Those were never-ending delights. And most astonishing of all was the fact that the brook that ran through the fields flowed into Plum Creek,

and that Plum Creek flowed into the Croton River, and that Croton River emptied into a great lake, from which its water was sent in huge pipes to New York City ! When Frederica was told all this it was almost too much of a marvel to believe. Was it really true that the water which flowed right past her there might flow through the faucet into her own tenement home ? It was so strange that the idea made her gasp. When, at the end of two weeks, she was taken back to her city home, she was full of the marvel of country joys and of the miracle of the city's water.

The next year, Frederica was sent for another two weeks to the country, but after that the preference was given to younger children, and for some years she saw no more of the country than could be viewed from the decks of excursion steamers as they sailed up the Sound or on the Shrewsbury River.

As the members of the family grew older, and the two brothers secured work, the circumstances of the household grew brighter, and there was much of gayety

and of little pleasures, for the father and mother knew the value of keeping the children happy at home. But there were no vacations in the country, and year by year Frederica's love and longing for the country increased. She grew to likable young womanhood. There was a demure shyness about her expression, combined with an effervescently droll tendency to fun, that made her peculiarly attractive. Her brown eyes were honest and deep. Her thick hair, golden-tinted, was coiled around the crown of her head like a coronet. When, once in a while, she let it hang, twin-braided, down her back, and smiled demurely, while joy laughed from her eyes, she was quaintly pretty indeed.

Hers was a sensitive soul, but she was strong and brave as well, did faithfully her share of the duties of the household, and was both gay and helpful. Her nature had in it a vivid love for music and dancing. As a child, she had danced, on the sidewalks, as did the other tenement children, to the music of the street pianos as they made their rounds; and there was a *verve* and grace about her motions that



As a child she had danced on the sidewalks.

W. D. S.

distinguished her dancing from that of others beside her. As she grew older, she was in great demand at parties and picnics. Her parents did not try to check her impulses, but they unremittingly watched her development and the character of her companions. The brothers frequently brought friends home with them, and this, too, broadened Frederica's acquaintance with young men.

Both of her parents possessed a homely shrewdness. They inculcated on the girl a policy of frankness and showed her that they were in sympathy with her life and joys. They were both from the happy Rhine country, and often, when their children were out, they would lovingly talk over the days of their own youth; the vine-clad hills, and the sweeping breadth of water, and the sparkle and gayety of their life, which was like the sparkle and gayety of their genial wines; of flower garlands, and of dances where round and round great circles wheeled, hand in hand.

“Our Frederica would love the Rhine country, eh, my Lena ?”

“Indeed, yes, my Diedrich!”

And the two would smile fondly at each other, and think again of the dancing and happiness of their youth, and of the green-bordered river and the old cast'les, though they were not antiquarians, and the two old ruins near their home had been, to them, merely places to which the young people of their neighborhood would troop, for a day's outing.

“But, Diedrich, what I am anxious about is that our Frederica shall get as good a husband as your Lena did!”

Whereupon Diedrich would flush with pleasure, and drop into German words and idioms, long disused.

“Ja, ja! She will a good husband get! Frederica the dancing likes—ja!—but she the good sense also has! Das ist so, meine Lena!”

With her brothers, or with friends, Frederica often went out; to gay parties, to dances, to the recreation piers, to moonlight or Sunday excursions on some steamer. Her life was full of pleasure; and what she most liked was the constant meeting with people that she knew; mani-

festing, in this, the gregariousness of her temperament.

She even liked the mingling with the customers, some of whom she knew but by sight, in the little grocery store on the ground floor of the tenement. The proprietor of the store was Philip Mehling, and he was shrewd, saving, and economical. He was a good-looking young fellow, quite reserved, and mistakenly thought, by some, to be a trifle slow. Even when in gay company he seldom danced, yet was genial, in his quiet, self-centred way, and had many friends. His closest companion was George Barth, a bright young fellow who loved dancing and music as much as did Frederica herself. Barth knew the Bluhmes well, and was often Frederica's companion and escort. He would often chide Philip on his quietness, and on his inattention to girls and to the gayeties of life.

“There you are, living in the little room at the back of your store! Spending so much of your time alone! And what do you eat? And how do you take care of yourself? You've got money enough, and ought to look around for a wife!”

It was with surprise that Barth finally discovered that Mehling was in love, and with Frederica—for he was in love with the girl himself.

It became apparent that, among her many suitors, her choice lay between those two. The young men remained as close friends as ever. They said to each other that what they wanted was that Frederica should be happy. Their rivalry made no discord. Each worked toward the same goal, and Barth was far the more confident. He saw to it that Frederica's life was a round of happiness. Music, parties, excursions, candy, dancing—and all his attentions were offered with such ease that it was a pleasure to be with him.

But once in a while the slower Mehling, on evenings when she was not engaged away from home, sat and talked with her. He, like her parents, was from the Rhine country, and he spoke of the fields and the flowers, of the meadows wet with dew, of the vine-clad cottages. But he also talked of what was more interesting to her. For a time, after coming to this country, he had lived with a relative, on a farm in

central New York; and he told her of the lowing cattle, the ploughing of the fields, the springing up of the grain, the corn huskings, and of the great turkeys, leading their broods about. And he made her talk of her own brief experiences in the country.

"Oh! How I love it all!" she would exclaim, with shining eyes.

With a shrewdness, and a knowledge of woman's nature, of which Barth would never have suspected him, Mehling gradually began to turn the talks from his own past experiences, and her reminiscences, to suggestions of the future. Without too boldly making his advances, he yet managed to draw comparisons between life in crowded New York and life where there were open fields, and he spoke of farm-houses in which a single room was equal in area to that of an entire tenement flat. And he noted how the girl's eyes glowed.

Gradually, he thought it all out. He himself had come to dislike some of the conditions of crowded life in New York. Would he feel satisfied to give up his little business, go into the country, and become

a farmer? He feared that Frederica would choose Barth, but thought her affection was not so firmly fixed but that, with life in the country thrown into his own scale, he might, after all, still win her. He made his decisive advance with carefully planned abruptness, after a more than usually enthusiastic interchange of ideas regarding the country.

“I am thinking of making a great change, Frederica.”

“A change?” she said.

“Yes. I am going to give up my store—give up my life in the city—and go away to where I can live in freedom and in the midst of beauty. I am going to be a farmer, Frederica!”

“Oh! How fine that will be! How glorious!” she exclaimed, tremulous with the thought of the happiness that was to be his. “And will you write and tell me all about the things you see and do there? And where is it going to be? And how soon are you going to leave us? We shall all be so sorry! But how happy you will be!”

“I do not want to go alone, Frederica,”

he said, gently. "I do not know how soon I shall go, or where I shall go. If the woman that I love will go with me, she shall decide. I shall go as soon as she will go with me. I shall go to some place she can love. Frederica—dear Frederica—will you not go with me? Will you not make me happy? Will you be a farmer's wife, Frederica?"

And Frederica, with flushed face and eyes glowing with happiness, said that she would go. Her parents, when it was announced to them, were greatly pleased. Barth was much disappointed, but spoke to Mehling in a manly way of his victory, and warmly congratulated him.

The wedding took place in a hall on Grand Street, and the half-dozen carriages that contained the nearest relatives, and closest friends, and the groomsman and bridesmaids, were a glow of color and of flowers. They were duly stared at, with open-mouthed admiration at so brave a show, and followed by a throng of screaming children. The hall was crowded, the ceremony was breathlessly watched (especially by the young women), and then

there were music and dancing and a glorious supper.

Finding that Philip really meant her to choose the district in which their home was to be, Frederica, in a flutter of delight, fixed upon the Croton country, for it was with that section that her dearest fancies lay. Accompanied by Frederica he took a flying trip to the region, after some correspondence with real-estate agents, and together they picked out a beautiful place, that was shortly to be sold under foreclosure. Frederica was delighted, and Mehling soon found himself the owner of the house and farm at a price much less than he had anticipated.

It was at a charming spot that the house was located, between Round Top and Watermelon Hill. The house stood well back from the road, and from its porch there was a magnificent view. There was all the effect of a mountainous country, among those Croton hills, and for miles and miles the eye could sweep over height beyond height, till the last hill was lost in blue and purple haze. There were rolling hills, wooded crests, wide expanses of al-

ternate field and forest, while nearer by were the homely fields of grain and vegetables, intercrossed with low walls of stone. Frederica had no words of praise; she was stunned with happiness; she could only turn to her husband, and throw her arms around him in a transport of joy.

Over the porch clambered a great trumpet vine, with deep-throated blossoms, in clusters of splendid orange. A "bread of heaven" tree—an ailanthus—stood in front of the porch, and in full blossom it was another wonder and glory. Other trees stood near by, and there were huge flowering shrubs, and there were beds of flowers. Each sunset was a new beauty; the wonderful variety made Frederica speechless with awe, while great stripes and glows of varied crimson tints faded into the opaline hues of the sky. And after the sunset, the air was bright with myriads of fire-flies, while far above all twinkled the silent stars.

And there were the cattle, and the chickens, and a turkey with its brood of little ones; Frederica almost feared that she was in a wonderful dream. And then Philip

drove her, one day, to the Fresh Air Home where she had felt her first taste of country joy, and she watched the little children playing and running about, just as she had run about, years before.

“O Philip! You have been so good to me!”

He looked at her fondly. “And I was afraid you would choose Barth,” he said.

She smiled with roguish happiness. “I think I might have done so if it hadn’t been that you liked the country as much as I did!” she cried.

He felt an uncomfortable sting, and then laughed nervously. She did not notice it.

Before long—although she did not confess this to her husband—one thing began to trouble her. She wished the house were on the main road, instead of a private lane, because she could never see anyone passing. She learned, after a time, that even if she could see them all she would see but few, for it was a lonely road.

The first visitor came to the house when they had been there six weeks. It was George Barth, who had been so cordially invited, by both, that he had taken the run

up there. Her parents had expected to make a visit before this, but to them it was a serious task, to be long and solemnly schemed for.

The visit of Barth was full of life. Mehling himself, during much of the time, was necessarily busy with farm work, but he noticed that his friend devoted himself to making Frederica happy, and that a certain sadness that he had fancied had gradually come over her, was disappearing. He watched her anxiously. Yes. The intangible weariness, the growing forlornness, that he had tried to believe were but fancies on his part, had all been there, for now he saw that they were going away, and that day by day Frederica was more bright and glowing.

Each evening the three sat together and talked of the past and of the future, and alternated jokes and pleasantries and serious discussion. Frederica could not hear too much of all that was going on in New York, and she laughed till the tears came as their visitor told tale after tale of the gay happenings there. Mehling, eclipsed by his friend's ebullience, was, for the most

part, rather silent. Once in a while an almost lowering expression flitted over his face, and he shifted uneasily.

There was not the slightest doubt of his wife; but he began to wonder, with melancholy self-questioning, whether he was the man who could give her the greatest happiness. Had there been a mistake? He glowered at the floor, listening to their mutual laughter, and the sound came to him with a sinister tang.

“What are you so silent for?” cried the gay voice of Barth. “Tell me more of what you do up here! Do you like the neighbors?” He turned brightly to Frederica. “What kind of people are they, and how do you get on with them?”

Frederica faltered, ever so little, and glanced at her husband, who said, with a grave discomfort that his friend could not but notice :

“We know little of them as yet. We—in fact—they seem like very nice people. But we have come as entire strangers, and it will be a little slow to get acquainted, very well, with many of them.”

The failure of even a single one of the

neighborhood residents to call was a bitter point with both husband and wife, although they seldom spoke of it. The husband, occupied with farm work, of which he had much to learn, and going back and forth over his fields, or busy in consultation with his hired man, who knew farming well, did not feel the matter as did his wife. And, too, the self-centred quietness of his disposition tended additionally to make him feel the neglect more as a slight than a deprivation. He was more angry than sorry. What more ought a man to wish for, so he often said to himself, than the wife of his choice and a home in that charming country? For day by day a love for the country grew upon him.

He never suspected that Frederica's passionate love for the country could decrease, and therefore it was that he ascribed her growing gloom, and then its temporary removal, to another than the true cause.

He did not know how she hungered for pleasant company. She had driven with him, a few times, to the nearest town, a tiny bit of a place, three miles away, but had keenly felt that the few people whom

she saw looked on her with chill disregard. That none of them wanted to speak in a friendly way became only too apparent, and she stopped going.

Some of the families of the neighborhood were descendants of ancestors who had lived there before the Revolution. Such people would not dream of associating with newcomers who so evidently were not of high social standing. Other families were wealthy and exclusive. Still others were poor, but exclusive. Others were not exclusive, but were too poor to essay the presumption of calling on people who were evidently well-to-do.

In some way—probably through remarks of the hired man, who was a free-talking fellow, and who had tried indefatigably to draw out the husband—the impression filtered through the strata of country society that the Mehlings were from a tenement district in New York and that the wife had danced a great deal. This fixed their status. A dancing-woman from the tenements! The very ones who danced oftenest and latest at the local gatherings were the bitterest in shunning them.

And one man, who was sixty-five years old, but who had been to New York but once in his entire life, declared, with an unequivocal conviction that compelled attentive consideration, that the big city was not a good place: he had seen many bad women there, who danced, so he felt sure, and lived in the tenements, and he thought it a bad sign—a very bad sign indeed.

At the time of the visit of Barth, the Mehlings had come to realize how completely they were to be cut off. To Frederica, it meant the absence of what had been as of the very essence of life—the comradeship of pleasant people. Barth's visit was therefore an unmixed joy to her, and when he said that he must return to New York, she urged him to remain, with a fervid insistence that chilled her husband, who bitterly noticed it, to the heart. When he went away, her eyes followed him with a longing that her husband, sadly meditative, observed with a painful sorrow.

In the middle of the night following Barth's departure, Frederica awoke with a shiver of fear. The night was pitchy dark. She listened, tense and frightened. The

air was filled with the chirring of crickets, the croaking of multitudinous frogs, the mingled notes of tree-toads and katydids and owls. She shuddered with the fear that overwhelmed her, and then could restrain herself no longer, and shrieked aloud. Her husband awoke, and soothed her, and made anxious questioning as to the cause of her fright.

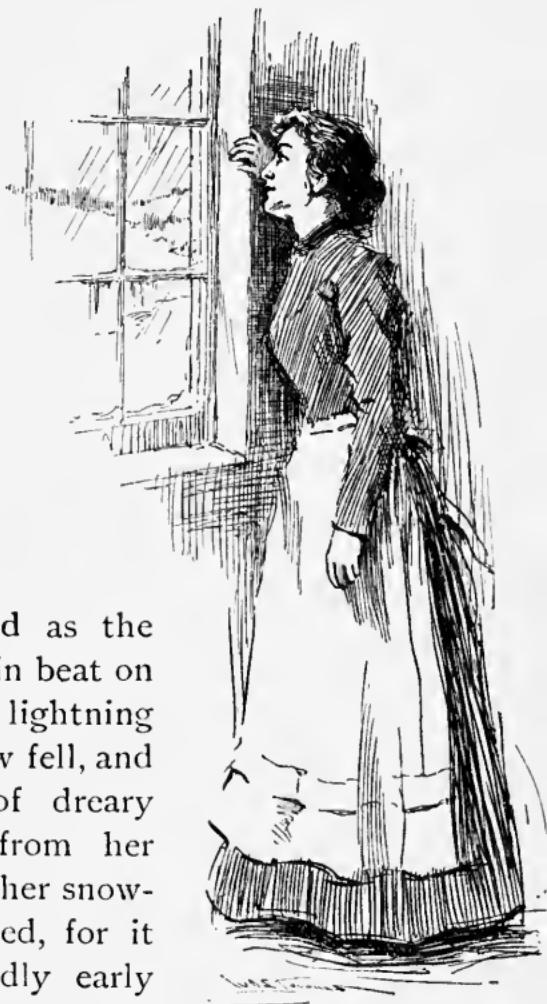
“I feel lonely—lonely—so lonely!” was all that Frederica could say.

The next morning he said nothing about her hysterical outbreak. He thought that he understood it, and he was too big-hearted, too loyal and loving, to upbraid her or tax her with a change of heart. She, poor thing, ascribed his silence to either a lack of feeling or a lack of interest in what most deeply concerned her. She was too proud and too ashamed to try to talk with him about it. She could not tell him that she could not look at the brook, swirling rapidly through their fields, without thinking that the water was destined to go to dear New York! And what though it was to be imprisoned with other water, in a great reservoir, and then made to run

through a small pipe and out of a narrow faucet! It was going to New York, and away from that solitary farm!

The breach between the husband and wife, impalpable at first and then steadily widening, began gradually to affect their natures. A dourness crept into his, gloom into hers, and neither spoke the words that would have tended toward a reuniting.

Storms came, and Frederica shuddered as the wind blew, and the rain beat on the windows, and the lightning flashed. The first snow fell, and there were miles of dreary whiteness visible from her chamber window. Other snowstorms quickly followed, for it was an unprecedentedly early winter, and there were huge



drifts piled in the lane that led out to the road. The lonely terror of it all so increased that Frederica's nerves finally began to give way, and, in spite of her protests that she was not sick, Philip sent for the doctor to come and see her. He was a kindly man, with a homely wisdom that was attractive. He talked pleasantly with the couple, and found that he liked them; and he appreciated their loneliness, though they did not complain of it. He called again, the next day.

"Have you ever tried to transplant young trees, that have grown up in the thickness of a grove?" he asked of Mehling. "No? Well, it is one of the most difficult of problems to make a tree grow up strong and healthy, when set out alone, after it has attained its strength and character in the midst of thick-crowded numbers."

Mehling did not understand him, but, being asked to tell something of Frederica, in the hope that the doctor could gain impressions of value in treating her curious case, he spoke of his wife's profound affection for the country; he told how she had longed for it for years, and how she had at

length gained what she so desired. When the doctor talked with Frederica, he noticed that she spoke listlessly of her home and its surroundings, and gave no hint that she found any particular happiness in them. "I remember how I used to love the country," she said.

The doctor saw there was a coolness between the two. He saw that the husband was touched with sorrowful mistrust. He saw, or fancied he saw, that the wife believed her husband to be unsympathetic and that she was concealing something from him. And they were both so honest and true!

Gatherings of the people were frequent, but no invitation came to the Mehlings. Now and then gay parties would go by, on "straw rides," and the shouts and the singing would come as a pang to both husband and wife. At the store and the post-office Mehling overheard talk of suppers and dances. All was gay and cheerful, but it was not for them. One day, Mehling and the doctor met on the road, and the doctor said, abruptly:

"Young man, are you sure you are

doing what you can for your wife's happiness?"

Mehling was painfully taken aback. He knew, though, that the doctor meant well by him.

"I gave up my business in New York for no other reason than to bring her to the country, that she so longed for," he answered, slowly.

"I did not know it, sir. I honor you. Well, I need not tell you, then, that love means a willingness to make sacrifices. And need I say," he added, with a quizzical smile, "that a woman always claims—or at least exercises—the privilege of changing her mind?"

Mehling grew deadly pale. "That's what I feared," he said, huskily. "What do you think a man can do, sir?"

"Are you willing to make another great sacrifice?"

"Yes. I can give her up, if it is best for her," replied Mehling, in a low tone.

"Give her up! What does the man mean?" cried the doctor, testily. "What do you want to get rid of her for? I thought you wanted to make her happy!"

Mehling was bewildered, but the tone in the doctor's voice made him clutch anew at hope.

"Tell me what you mean! Tell me! I have loved her so much that perhaps I have been blind! Isn't it that she's tired of me—would rather have——"

"Tired of you! Not that I have noticed," said the doctor, dryly. "But she's tired of something else! Oh, yes; I know it was the dearest wish of her heart, and all that, but women love to change their minds. She's lonely, man!" he almost roared, for he was eager to force Mehling into belief. "She's lonely! Can't you see it? She needs lots of life! She needs to see people all the time—to see things going on! Don't I know? Can't I see it? Now, make your sacrifice! Of course, it will be hard; you will lose money by these changes; but she's worth losing money for, young man. She's worth it! And what is life for, if it isn't to get the greatest happiness you can with your money? Take your wife back to the city! Let her see the crowds and hear the noise again!"

Mehling went home in a glow of hope. He entered the house, and was appalled by the pitiful loneliness that looked at him from his wife's eyes. He spoke to her, for the first time in many weeks, with a tone in which was absolute confidence as well as love, and then he felt a poignant reproach for his previous blindness as he saw the light leap into her eyes. He drew her to him, and they sat down together, and he said, very gently:

"I am thinking of making a great change, Frederica."

"A change?" she said.

"Yes. I am going to give up my farm—give up my life in the country" (he was speaking very rapidly now, for he watched the glow of happiness deepening in her face); "I am going to take you back to the city, where you can live again in little rooms, and on a crowded street, but where you will be happy. Yes, Frederica, you will again live in a tenement!"

"O Philip! And you are going to do all this just to please me—just to please me!" There was a solemn wonder in her voice.

"I am going to make my Frederica happy," he said.

"And you are going to do it all for me! And I—I—oh, Philip, I was afraid you didn't care!"

"Not care, Frederica?"

"Oh, oh, oh! And you gave up your store just to make me happy, and now you will give up your farm? It is too much, Philip! I don't deserve it! I don't!"

She buried her head on his shoulder, and laughed and cried in a flurry of joy.

"You deserve everything in the world, Frederica. And if you get tired of the city, back we'll come to the country. And I'm going to try to get the same store again, for it was there we first saw each other. And I believe it was never anybody but—"

"Of course it wasn't!"

"And you'll have it all again! The noise, and the crowds—and—and—we'll notice the dirt and the smells, after this, too, Frederica! Do you remember the dirt and the smells?"

"Do I?" she exclaimed, laughing through her tears. "Yes. And I'm just

going to love everything ! But—but—will you bring me back here—once in a while —for a visit, Philip ? ”

“ Yes. And we'll visit all the best families, and return their calls,” he said, so gravely that she shrieked with laughter.

THE MISERY IN MIS' RANDOLPH'S
KNEE

THE MISERY IN MIS' RANDOLPH'S KNEE

A LARGE and very black woman, with a face creased into so many valleys and ridges that it looked like a map in relief of a round island of very uneven surface, was glaring with defiance at a man who sat across from her in the Lexington Avenue car that I had just taken at Thirtieth Street. I recognized the man at once as one of the foremost surgeons of the city, and I noticed that he was ill at ease and embarrassed under the snappy glare and the tilting tosses of anger. That the woman was evidently respectable and not intoxicated was what made it, doubtless, impossible for the man entirely to ignore her manifestations.

I recognized the woman, too. She was "Mis' Randolph," a laundress, whom I had known for over a year as a faithful and

hard-working woman. She was a widow, her husband, a shiftless fellow whom she had worshipped and labored for, having died shortly after she began doing my weekly work. She had not mourned him long, in spite of her erstwhile worship, and the "misery in her knee" was all that made a black spot, so to speak, in her existence.

This "misery" gave her a pronounced limp, and at times, especially when a change of weather impended, caused her acute suffering.

"It's going to be falling weathah, shu'," she would declare. "My bayrummetah says so, and so it will sholy be."

Whenever I suggested that a doctor might be of benefit, she shook her head with mournful decision, saying that no doctors could help her any more than they had, as she had tried them and knew. Once I remarked that hospital treatment might cure her, but she exclaimed, with a sudden fright that surprised me :

"No, suh! No, suh! No doctah, an' no sawjun's going to saw Mis' Randolph's knee!"

She delighted in giving herself the full

designation of "Mis' Randolph," and was keenly pleased when others did the same, instead of calling her by her plain first name.

"I'm Virginiah fine folks! Harry and me ain't no common colo'd pussons! Our folks was all Randolphs—big white folks—and they owned houses as big as the city hall—and their land it went for miles and miles—and they had lots and lots o' common colo'd pussons to work for them, and fine folks like me and Harry to take keer of the inside of the house!"

But Mrs. Randolph in the street-car was a different person from Mrs. Randolph as I had ever before known her. Her wonted good humor had all vanished, and she was the personification of threatening wrath. More surprising still, her lameness had entirely departed! At Twenty-fourth Street she signalled to the conductor, with great dignity, to stop the car, stood very stiffly erect for a moment, glaring down at the surgeon, gave a final tilt and toss of defiance, and then stalked majestically from the car without the slightest limp. She was far too occupied with the surgeon to recognize me

or to glance at any of the amused passengers. At the door she gave a backward look, a victorious sniff, and, stepping from the platform, marched stiffly away, still



without a sign of lameness, and darting Parthian glances over her shoulder with the same look of triumph.

On the following Thursday she came to my rooms, as usual, and I noticed that

there was a full return of her customary limp. In fact, she moaned and complained about the "misery" even more than usual, and said that a big storm must certainly be at hand or else she had somehow hurt her knee.

"And you must feel it the more keenly through its coming back after you had just gotten entirely rid of the lameness," I said.

She looked at me with inquiring wonder. "Got rid of it, suh! No. The misery hain't left me, nohow, and won't never leave me till Mis' Randolph is daid."

"But in the street-car, on last Sunday, I noticed that you did not limp at all," I responded.

"Was you in that kah, suh?" she cried. And then she chuckled gleefully. "'Deed, my misery hain't left me, and it was just force o' charactah that made me do that! It hurt me, and the misery is hurting me to-day just from what I did. But I was bound not to let that Hessian see me limp! Did you see him, just sitting across from me in that kah? I made him feel uncomfortable, too, with looking at him so scorn-

ful! I'm a Randolph of Virginiah and it comes natural to look scornful at a Hessian. And I wouldn't let him see me limp! No, suh! That Hessian!"

Whenever Mrs. Randolph wished to express the very extreme of contempt or dislike toward anybody, she was wont to call him a "Hessian." She could give no explanation of the word, except that it had been a common term of opprobrium in Virginia, and that she had learned it, when a child, as a natural and common word. It interested me as being, apparently, a transmitted survival of the Revolutionary hatred of the Hessian soldiery.

"That Hessian see me limp! I wouldn't let him nohow! That Hessian he once tried to cut off Mis' Randolph's laig!"

"Indeed! And how did you manage to escape having it done?"

"I escaped just through force o' charactah," she said, with dignity. "I just walked to the boat, and I hadn't got no pass, but I just remembered that I was a Randolph of Virginiah, and I got away from the island all right. It was just force o' Randolph charactah!"

The reference to the island and the pass told me that there was just one place where the adventure had occurred. "You never told me, before, that you were on Blackwell's Island," I said.

A look of deepest chagrin came over her face, and the ridges dolorously unfolded, lengthening the customary round island until it seemed like a map of Africa.

"That's what comes of talking free. Seems as if when my fool mouth opens the words runs out just like wattah a-running from a faucet. Yes, suh. I was on the Island two years ago; but o' course I never told you, for I was feared you would think Mis' Randolph 'd been and done somefin'. And now my fool tongue's been and told it. But it wasn't for any wrong, nohow!"

I reassured Mrs. Randolph by saying that I was well aware that there were not less than from six to eight thousand people on the Island, and that they were scattered among quite a number of institutions, including two large hospitals, and that, therefore, in spite of the fact that, in popular parlance, the words "the Island"

were understood to mean the Workhouse, she need not have been afraid that I should think that Blackwell's contained nothing but the Workhouse and the hospital wards connected with that correctional institution.

“I presume that you were a patient at either the Metropolitan or the City Hospital,” I said.

“Yes. That was just it. I was at the City Hospital,” she replied, with a sigh of relief, as the creases drew back into their natural ridges.

“The misery in my knee was bad—very bad—and I had to give up my work; and Harry—he was my husband, you know—he was just earning a little, and the doctah he told me to go to the hospital. He say, ‘Mis’ Randolph, you just go.’ And I say, ‘Huccome I go to the hospital, doctah, when you’ve done took all the money I had? Yes. All the money I had I has paid to you.’ And with that he laughed, and he laughed, and then he say, ‘Well, then I must get you in the hospital without paying nothing.’ And he laughed again, and say, ‘Sholy, Mis’ Randolph, I

must get you in the hospital plumb free. And I'll tell 'em you're real lame, and they'll send an amb'lance for you.'

"And I tells all the neighbors what come in to see me, including Mis' Brown, who was just a common colo'd pusson, spite of her giving herself airs because her husband work as assistant to the janitor of one of them big, new twenty-story buildings downtown, and I says to Mis' Brown and all the other neighbors that I was going to have the amb'lance come to the street for me special, and that the great city of New York was a-going to try to cure the misery in this knee.

"And so, one day there come a-ringing and a-clanging in the street—it was Thompson Street where I lived then, suh—and the amb'lance drove right up to the door of the tenement, and there was a big excitement. Seemed as if the street was all alive with fine colo'd folks, and common colo'd pussons like Mis' Brown, and at every window there was haids a-sticking out.

"And I feels real proud. I has Harry take me down to the amb'lance, a-leading and a-supporting me, and me just a-moan-

ing and a-groaning about the misery in my knee, and all the rest they so envious and so jealous that they almost ready to kill me! Oh, it was a grand day for Mis' Randolph! And I bows to all I can see, real condescending like, and I says to Mis' Brown, with a toss of my haid: 'You didn't believe me when I said I was a-going to be sent for special with the amb'lance and drove away to the hospital, but you just see that they thinks a good deal of Mis' Randolph. I ain't no common no-account colo'd pusson, Mis' Brown!'

"And she know what I mean, and she look at me with her face twisted as if she had green persimmons in her mouth, and then she say, just as thin and mean as sour plum juice: 'But you won't come back a-driving, lessen in a daid-wagon.' And then she snicker right out.

"And I says, just like a Virginiah Randolph ought to talk to common folks: 'Deed, Mis' Brown; I'll come back a-riding just as grand as I goes away.'

"But the good Lawd knows just why I said that same. It come out of my mouth

before I stopped to think. Just like the faucet, as I said befo'. But I wasn't going to take it back, for I always speak real big to that jealous Mis' Brown, and then I was drove away all grand and dignifidy, and everybody they laugh at Mis' Brown and everybody they think that Mis' Randolph is big folks shu.

"Oh, that was a grand day, suh—a grand day! 'Tain't often the good Lawd he gives even Virginiah fine folks such a day as that! But they was a better day a-coming! Yes; there was a better and a grander day a-coming!

"Well, they took me across on a big steamah, and to the hospital, and there the big doctahs they all come and they look and they look at my knee and they all try to cure the misery in it. They wraps it, and they puts poultices and liniments on it, and they ties it and they unties it, and they twists it round and round like as if 'twas nothing but a brake on a street-kah. Then they shakes their hails all solemn like, and after trying for a good many days they says, 'We must wait and show this to the big sawjun.'

"And I asks the nurse who is the big sawjun who is to look at Mis' Randolph's laig, and she say, flip like, 'He's the sawjun that saws people's laigs clean off.' And I say, 'Fo' the Lawd, I hopes that sawjun won't look at Mis' Randolph's knee. The misery's bad, but it would be wusser to have no knee to have the misery in.'

"In a few days I heahs one of the doctahs say to the nurse that the big sawjun was a-coming into the ward. And in a few minutes in he come, all grand like, and they take him right over to Mis' Randolph's baid as if there ain't nobody in the hospital so important as me.

"And he was the same Hessian that was in the kah, suh! The very same big Hessian! And he have me carried to a room where they was bottles and things all 'round, and where they lays me out on a big flat piece of glass, and there he twists and turns my laig, and shakes his haid real solemn, like the preacher do when he prays for the sinner that he knows the Lawd won't save. And he say, 'The misery in Mis' Randolph's knee am very bad.' But he look just

so foolish solemn as a owl. Then he say, 'Very curious case. Must look into this myself.' Then he stand with two doctahs at the side of the room, and the three they jerk their hails and nod just like three fat Virginiah buzzards a-waiting for somefin to die.

"Of course, I feels real proud that the misery in my knee is so important to the big men, and I didn't know the sawjun was a Hessian till after I was carried back to my own baid. But while I lies there, I hears him tell the nurse, 'Yes, at ten to-morrow morning.' And they both look at Mis' Randolph, and it all come to me plain as if I had heard every word.

"I don't say anything right away, for first I waits and makes a plan, thinking it all out careful. And 'long 'bout three o'clock I speaks to the nurse as she comes near me, and I say, 'Oh, this misery am real bad; I can't stand it much longer!' And I groans and kicks up like. And I say, 'Is it ten o'clock in the morning that the big sawjun is a-coming to saw it off?' And she say, 'Yes.' And then she ask, quick like, 'But huccome you to know

that?' But I just groan and say, 'Oh, how this misery hurts me!'

"Pretty soon she go away, and I have my plan all fixed. I knows I can't afford to have my laig cut off, for then I couldn't work for Harry no more when they sends me home. And I didn't want it off nohow. Do me a heap sight more good on. Well, my clothes they hang in a closet at the end of the room, and when the nurse goes away, before five, as I knowed she did every afternoon, for 'bout half an hour, to meet a clerk from the office, I gets up and goes to the closet and gets the clothes. Some of the other women they look at me, lazy like, and wondering, but they don't say nothing. I goes quick, though the misery hurts me real bad, and then I goes out into the hall, and down the last stair on the side to'a'ds where the boat lands. Not the big steamah that took me there but a little one that goes straight across the river every hour. I had seen it from the window, and watched it, pretty nigh every day, having little to do there you know, suh, and I knowed all about it from others in the ward.

"I didn't know just how I could do it, for I knowed I ought to have a pass, but I just recommembered that I was a Randolph of Virginiah and that I musn't disgrace the family by being beat. And I also recommembered my laig and the Hessian. So I slipped out of the end door, and went down to the boat real stately, and there was a line of people, each with a ticket in his hand, just as if 'twas the theatre.

"And all at once I wanted to shout Hallelujah, for I saw the captain of the boat, and I knowed him, for I had washed and ironed for him and his wife before the misery made me give up work. And so I held my haid high and didn't look at the man that stood by the plank the people walked on. I just looked over his haid, and I nodded to the captain, and I says, 'Howdy,' and then I steps over the side of the boat, to'a'ds where the captain stood, and I nod and speak to him while the man say, 'Pass, your pass!' And I pretends not to hear the man, but speaks right up to the captain, very grand, remembering I was a Randolph, and I says that I would

like to have his work again to do, as I have been cured and sent away from the hospital. And he say that he is real glad to hear it, and the man taking up passes sees that the captain knows me for shu', and so kept on busy with the folks that come after me.

“ I was afraid to let the captain see that my laig still hurt, for he might have said, ‘ Mis’ Randolph, you’re not cured, and must go right back.’ And I was afraid that they would come a-running and a-chasing after me from the hospital. But no one come, and the boat it took me over. I got a nickel from the captain to ride downtown, and I took the Second Avenue trolley, and I got off at Bleecker Street and the Bowery.

“ But the misery in my knee was so much worse, from all I had made the knee do, that it seemed as if I couldn’t walk a step nohow. I leaned against a big packing box and wondered how I was ever going to get to Thompson Street. And when the hurt got worse, and I remembered Mis’ Brown, and how aggravating she would be, I almost asked a policeman

to send me back to the Island. But I thought of that Hessian and my laig and I felt too mad.

“I prayed and prayed more than I ever did at church, and then the help it come! It was after six o'clock, and there was only people a-hurrying home, and along came a wagon—a covered wagon, shaped like a hearse, with bells and looking-glasses ringing and shining, and with plumes on the horses and on the wagon too. It looked some like a band-wagon but more like a daid-wagon, except for the ringing bells. And the driver was Ben Johnson, and I knowed him, for he was near kin.

“And I stepped out into the street and I said, ‘Ben Johnson, you just stop.’ And he stopped quick, right surprised. And I said, ‘Ben, you must drive me home. The misery in my knee’s so bad I can’t walk.’ And he said, ‘I’m real sorry, but ‘deed I can’t. I’m taking this wagon to the stables, and they’d discharge me. This wagon belongs to a big flower-store, and I’m the regular driver,’ he said, real big. It’s surprising, suh, how stuck up some colo’d pussons gets ‘bout themselves. I

always used to say to Harry, 'We mus'n't forget, Harry, we are Randolphs of Virginiah, but we mus'n't let ourselves ever get stuck up.'

"Well, I looks Ben Johnson square in the eye, and I say, 'Ben Johnson, you are close kin of mine, for you are second cousin to my Aunt 'Liza. And you are a-courting of Miss Jen, and I knows her well, and I knows as well as you that she's got money in the bank. And if you don't take me I'll tell Miss Jen just how mean a man Ben Johnson is.' He looked at me real sober, at that, and so I speak to him again, very dignifidly. 'Ben Johnson, I know you don't d'lib'r'etly do mean things, and so you're going to drive me home. And if you don't want me on the seat I can just climb inside.'

"At that he laughed right out, and said that he couldn't let that be done on the open street. But you may remember, suh, that there's an alley there, twisting back out of sight, and so I told him to drive right in there. And he did. Then he opens the back door quick, and in I crawls, and he jumps back again to the

seat and drives away, while I hears some low-down man a-laughing fit to kill. And the inside of that wagon was as full of the smell of flowers as a Virginiah hill-side in the springtime.

“ Through a crack at the front I told Ben to drive real slow on Thompson Street, for I wanted to surprise Mis' Brown. And I found another little hole, where I could look through, and when we drove so slow down Thompson Street the people they all looked out of the windows and stood around the stoops, wondering about the grand wagon, and if it was really going to stop somewhere. And Ben, he sit and drive just so solemn as a undertakah.

“ And Mis' Brown, I see her come out, and I hear her say, ‘ What's this, what's this ? ’ as the wagon stop right in front of the house where Harry and me lived, and Mis' Brown too. And Ben Johnson he say, real mou'nful, ‘ It's Mis' Randolph, and I've brung her back again. Won't someone go up and tell her husband to come ? ’

“ And Mis' Brown she grin real aggravating, showing all her teef, and she cry

out to Mis' Minetty, 'I told Mis' Randolph she could only come back a-riding in the daid-wagon, and in the daid-wagon she have come !'

"And that made me mad, and from the



inside of the wagon I called back to her, 'Just wait a minute and I'll come out, and show Mis' Brown who's daid !' And my voice must have sounded dreadful hollow, for Mis' Brown she just screech and screech, and before she could run away the door of

that wagon swung open with me a-pressing on it, and out my feet went and hung there a-wiggling, and Mis' Brown she just let out another screech and then flopped down in her-steriks.

“ Oh, it was a grand day, suh! A grand, grand day! Never was such a triumph happen on Thompson Street! And all the people they thought Mis' Randolph the triumphantest pusson in the whole big city. It was sholy a grand day!

“ And the misery in my knee wa’n’t never so bad after that neither. Seems like as if the doctahs on the Island must have helped it pretty consid’ble after all, with their twistings and linimentings. It’s still a bayrummetah for the weathah, and it often uncomfortably hurts, but ‘tain’t nigh so bad as ‘twas.

“ But, oh! the glory of the ride in the amb’lance! And, oh! the bigger triumph of the return that gave Mis' Brown her-steriks! And do you think Mis' Randolph would have let that Hessian see her limp, aftah he wanted to saw her laig clean off! That Hessian!”

BEFORE THE ARCHBISHOP

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MAGGIE THORLEY was as cheerful a young woman as any of the thousands who, like her, lived in the packed district of the lower East Side. Her parents had died when she was but seventeen years old, leaving her the care of her sister Annie, two years younger. By hard work she had succeeded, with the aid of \$60 in savings, left by her father, in bringing herself and Annie safely to womanhood.

The girls had been given some schooling, both were good-looking and attractive, and Maggie was fortunate enough to get a responsible position in a Grand Street store, and after a while to secure for Annie a clerkship on Fourteenth Street. They thus escaped the fate of many of the girls of their acquaintance, who were compelled, for a pittance, to work from sunrise until

long after sunset for the sweat-shops of the neighborhood.

For a long time, indeed, Maggie chose to do sewing at night, in her room, and also on holidays, to earn a little extra money for frocks and ribbons for Annie and herself, but when her own wages were raised and Annie was fairly established in her clerkship she thought it unnecessary to continue the sewing. With the \$3.25 a week that she was paid, and the \$2.75 of Annie's, the two sisters, by dint of economy, were able to live in a comfortable way, in their two-room home, on the third floor, rear, of the seven-story tenement-house to which they had moved as their fortunes brightened.

The larger room served as kitchen, dining-room, sitting-room, and parlor, and it looked upon a stone-paved court, on the farther side of which towered another huge tenement, also teeming from basement to roof with crowded human life. In this room were three wooden chairs, a stove, and a table, while on the walls were pinned colored pictures which were deemed none the worse for garishly advertising the mer-

its of various soaps and teas. Everything, though cheap and simple, was immaculately neat. From this opened the other room—if room it could be called—which was only a dark closet, with barely enough of space to hold the bed. It was without light, and even without ventilation, except for a square hole opening into a narrow air-shaft.

“It’s a good deal to pay \$7.50 a month for rent,” said Maggie to her friend, Kittie Kinsella, “but there’s \$12 put away in the Bowery Bank, in Annie’s name, and I can do extra sewing again, at any time, if we need it. And together we earn \$6 a week, so we can afford to have a nice place to live. And I must think of Annie’s chances, for I want her to be sure and get a good beau—like yours, you know——”

She smiled, and tucked Kittie’s arm closer within her own. Kittie, whose father was a fireman, earning \$2.50 a day, was being courted by a motorman on the Third Avenue line, and she blushed and giggled.

“Yes,” continued Maggie, “I feel that we ought to live in style, or the young fel-

lows won't be near so likely to come courting. And I've got to be a mother to Annie, and think of her chances of getting a good husband. It's only on the third floor that we live, you know, and it's real tony, instead of having to climb so many stairs, and I just thought the fellows maybe wouldn't want to climb any higher. Of course, if they got to know Annie real well they would, but I mean at the first, you know, and it's so much in making a good hit at the start. And we live in as fashionable a house as any on the street!" she added, with pride.

"And how old is Annie getting to be?" asked Kittie.

"She's just eighteen, and that's two years younger than I am. It was my birthday last Friday."

"And how about yourself?" said Kittie, with a sly pressure of the arm interlocked with her own. "It's wise men they'd be if they came for that."

"Oh, it's sister Annie I must think about first. She's such a dear, good girl that it's what I'd want to do even if father and mother hadn't told me special to look after

her. There'll be time enough to think about myself later."

"Well, I don't know about that," said her friend, cautiously. "It's all right to think about Annie, but a girl must think about herself too, or chances'll slip. Well, this is my stairway ; good-night, dear."

Although Kittie had not noticed it, Maggie had herself blushed a little when her own chances had been mentioned. Maggie had, in truth, worked and planned and sacrificed unselfishly, since the death of her parents, for the sake of her sister, but of late thoughts of love had come into her own heart. Dan Barrett, a young carpenter, who lived on the fourth floor of the same big tenement-house, had already looked in on the girls several times, and it was plain that he found pleasure in doing so. He had quickly become acquainted with them through the fact that his mother, since the day of the sisters' entrance into the tenement, had taken a bustling interest in them. She liked them very much, and the liking increased as she came to know them better. She had for quite a while past been hoping for the appearance of a

girl who would make the right wife for her son, whom she wished safely married, and she thought that with the coming of the Thorley sisters she had made the desired discovery.

“They’re the right kind, Dan,” she said. “Both of them’s good, and though the younger one has got softer hands than the other, and though her eyes are brighter and there ain’t no crow’s-feet begun to show, yet I misdoubt it’s Maggie as has worked the hardest, and stayed up nights the latest, and worried the most, and that’s why she’s not quite so pretty. But she’s pretty yet, Dan. And a girl that gets her hands hard with honest work, and gets her eyes tired sewing while her sister sleeps, is the right kind for a man to tie up to. Not but what Annie seems a nice girl, too, though.”

Dan’s own judgment followed that of his mother in so far as thinking both of the sisters very nice, and he took real pleasure in sitting and chatting with them. Once he took them to an ice-cream room on Third Avenue, twice he walked with them to the Battery, and sat with them on

a bench to hear the band play, while the water surged against the stone retaining wall, and boats glided by in ghostly procession, and once he took them for an even-



ing's ride on an excursion-steamer, and their joy had been complete.

"Which sister is it?" asked the tenement-dwellers, among themselves. Maggie, for her part, felt a shy belief that it was she, for she knew that Dan had been the

more attentive to her, and had been prompt in little courtesies. And then, too, had he not told her how much he admired her singing! It never occurred to her that the wearied eyes and incipient wrinkles that had come through her unselfish care for her sister could militate against her, and, indeed, the eyes were daily brightening and the signs of wrinkles were beginning to vanish. It never occurred to her that Dan's attentions were possibly owing to the fact that she was Annie's older sister and therefore her guardian, whom it might be well to propitiate, and that it was possible that they were made as a means of tactfully concealing his real feelings until he should fully make up his own mind.

It was the evening of a July day, and Maggie was singing happily to herself as she thought of how handsome Dan had looked, and with what happy cordiality he had spoken, as she passed him, at the foot of the stairs, an hour before. She was cleaning, with gasoline, a pair of her sister's gloves, and when Annie, after what seemed a long absence, considering that

she had only gone to a near-by grocer's for sugar, finally came back, her singing did not cease. Daylight had almost vanished, but Maggie, sitting by the window, had not noticed the gradual change. She did not notice that Annie seemed elated, for she herself was dreamily thinking of happiness and Dan. Annie wanted to speak, but with a happy smile and a blush that was unseen in the darkness, checked herself. Then she said, but a little stiffly, on account of her effort to make her voice sound quite natural :

“ I’m going to go out in a little while—with Dan. He’s going to call for me, to take me over to the Atlantic Garden. It’ll be all right, won’t it ? ”

“ Yes, dear.” The voice was very calm. No one could suspect that there had come a sudden wrench on Maggie’s heart-strings. What did it mean ? This was the first time that Dan had asked one of the sisters to go out with him without asking the other also. Maggie sat very still, and let Annie’s gloves lie in the basin in her lap. Annie busied herself nervously about the room.

"And—and—he was talking with me down at the door—and—I think maybe he's got something special to ask me."

"Why, Annie, is that so? How nice, dear!"

But Annie's quick ear detected a false note in the words. "I do believe you're not glad to hear it! You don't think I'd ever consent to leave you all alone, do you, whatever Dan wanted? You're the dearest and best sister that a girl ever had! And now let me look at you, you dear, dear Maggie!"

She pirouetted gayly, and, striking a match, held it toward Maggie's face, and in that moment there came a fierce upflaring of the gasoline. With a cry of pain, and with her hands pressed to her eyes, Maggie sprang from her chair, and neighbors came running to the room as the sisters uttered scream on scream. Some ran to turn in an alarm, while others remained and fought out the fire that had quickly begun to blaze on the floor and up the window.

Dan himself, the first to arrive, cared for poor Maggie, extinguished the fire in her

clothing, and then dashed downstairs for a doctor. Meeting a policeman who came running up, he panted : "Fire's out ! Send an ambulance call, quick ! Woman's badly burned !"

But the policeman first continued on his way upstairs, and the more leisurely for having been told that the fire was out. Not till he had taken a look at Maggie's face, and heard her moans of anguish, did he retrace his steps and send in an ambulance call. No one had done it before him, for all knew that the hospital would not respond to the call, unless made by a policeman.

The girl was taken to Gouverneur Hospital, where nothing could be done for her except to alleviate the dreadful pain. The next day she was transferred to Bellevue, where the resident hospital staff and the grave visiting surgeons looked at her and said that she would never be able to see again. It was not for some weeks that this decision was finally reached, and meanwhile Maggie was in a state of frantic suspense, not alone from the dread of blindness, but also from fear as to what would become of her sister.

Annie called at the hospital but seldom. It interfered with her work, which had necessarily become of more vital importance than before, and besides, the condition of Maggie was for some time so critical as to make the doctors forbid any but rare visits from anyone. Rent day came, and it took all the ready money to pay it. Then, to purchase some delicacies for the sufferer, Annie drew a little money from the bank, and Maggie's anxiety was increased.

"Don't buy me anything else," she insisted. "You must take care of every cent. And what are you going to do for a home—if—if I never——"

"Don't talk so, Maggie. Of course you'll be with me again after a while."

"But for the present, then? Will one of the girls go in with you? I don't want you to live alone. And will you have to go to a cheaper place? Are you making any arrangements?"

"No, I haven't made any arrangements yet, but I've been talking it over with—with Mrs. Barrett, and I'll do something pretty soon."

One Sunday, three weeks after the accident, Annie tiptoed softly to her sister's cot. "Somebody's come with me," she whispered. "It's Dan. And he wants me to tell you that we're going to be married on Thursday of next week."

Maggie sighed chokingly, and tears streamed from her sightless eyes as she groped tremulously for the hands of each. "I'm so glad; I sha'n't need to worry about you now, dear. Dan'll be good to you, I know. And you're getting a good wife, Dan, if it is her sister that says it. God bless you, both of you!" They did not stay long, and went away very quietly, without talking with Maggie of their plans for the future. The blind girl wept for hours.

After a while she was removed to the Metropolitan Hospital, on Blackwell's Island, and in a few more weeks, as she had neither money nor influence to secure admittance to a blind asylum, she was transferred to the Almshouse, and became an inmate of the women's blind ward. There, the sluggish, grinding monotony of her daily life, in the company of the

score of other pauper women who shared the ward with her, soon brought on a dark despondency.

Against the immitigable fate that had come upon her she cried out from the depths of a poignant bitterness. The visits of her sister became much rarer than before, although there was no longer the mandate of a doctor to keep her away. "I'm so busy—just starting housekeeping—so many things to see to," was the excuse at first, but before long there came to be no excuse at all. Neither did Annie, except on rare occasions, carry with her any little delicacy to lighten the monotony of Almshouse fare. "You know, you told me not to, and Dan and me have got to be economical or we can't save." Visits made Annie feel so gloomy that the mere thought of the Island was depressing, and she would seize upon the slightest obstacle as a reason for not going there. Dan made no pretence whatever of caring to visit Maggie.

That it was eight full steps and a short one from her cot to the table; that it was fourteen steps from the cot to the door;

that beyond the door she dare not go without a guide or till repeated and careful experiments should make the venture safe, were the first prime facts that Maggie had to learn. Up and down, up and down the ward she would slowly pace, feeling her way with the beat of her stick upon the floor; a grawsome tapping that was echoed and re-echoed by the sticks of the other blind women, her companions.

The snarling eagerness with which the sluttery women answered the curt call to meals, their greedy ravening when the coarse food was within their reach, the gross sounds, the rough, gnarling curses from both spiller and spilled-upon when soup was overturned, immeasurably sickened her. The quarrelling, the cries of hopelessness, and the fits of weeping almost maddened her, and then would come long silences, pregnant with misery, and strident laughter, more awful than the curses or the weeping. Some had learned to accept their fate with seared stoicism. Others were glad that another and still more miserable one, because younger, had been added to their number. Some there

were who bore their doom with resignation, who went about with sad quietude, and who strove to soften Maggie's misery with comforting words; but for her there was no comfort.

Some of the women sewed or knitted, but most did nothing but lie upon their narrow cots, or sit on their little round stools, or go tappingly to the door, to stand, or sit on a bench, in the sunshine, and to smoke or rub snuff, if some friend had sent them a few pennies, while they exchanged vacuous gossip with each other, and their coarse-hooded heads nodded cunningly. Maggie, although she had been a fine seamstress, had no heart to learn blind-work, although Annie had left her a ball of yarn and a couple of knitting needles. "It'll help to keep your mind occupied, now that you're alone so much," she had murmured.

One day Maggie, sitting idly on her low stool, broke into a song, a ballad that she had frequently sung in those days that now seemed so long, long ago. It was "Sweet Rosie O'Grady," and, as she sang, the girl remembered that it had been a

favorite of Dan's, and that he had praised her singing of it. There were tears in her voice, and the happy words were given with a quivering sadness that touched strange chords in the hearts of the women, while the blind men, at the door of their ward, next door, paused from their eternal prosing about nothings, and listened in solemn quiet. And there was another listener. The priest, the kindly Jesuit who ministered to the souls of the inmates of the institutions on the northern end of the Island, caught the sounds as he was passing by, and stood and listened attentively.

“ For I love Rosie O’Grady,
And Rosie O’Grady loves me,”

came the words, thrilling with dirge-like sadness, and then there was quiet. The blind girl did not sing again, and in the hush of waiting expectancy the priest entered the ward. He knew, without asking, which was the singer, for toward her every sightless face was bent.

“ My daughter, I heard you singing as I passed. Would you not like to be one of the chapel choir?”

“But, father, can I sing well enough for that?” was her incredulous response, while a thrill of joy shot through her at the prospect of a brightening of her life.

“Yes, for you have a good voice. The woman who took the soprano part died a month ago, and I need someone to take her place. I know you will need teaching, of course, and I shall teach you.”

Maggie threw herself with hungry eagerness into the task of learning to sing the solemn Catholic chants. Her quick memory served her well in learning the words of the grand old hymns, and the grave beauty of the music spoke directly to her heart.

The day on which she sang for the first time in the choir was one of tense excitement to her. An old man, who had known how to play the melodeon in his youth, and who through a spinal injury received in a railroad accident had been forced to go to the Almshouse to end his days, was the organist. The alto part was taken by a young woman who, twisted with rheumatism and able to walk only with the aid of a pair of crutches, was at the same time

the victim of an asthma that at times forced a cruelly incongruous wheeze into an otherwise fairly good voice. The tenor was a blind man who had sung on street corners to the accompaniment of a droning little organ. The basso had but one eye, while his voice, owing to an affection of the throat, was alternately of a tremendous volume and of a thin squeakiness.

On the day that Maggie Thorley first sang there were a few among the large congregation who noticed that there was a new singer, and they nodded and nudged each other, but most of the people stolidly took the change without any knowledge that it had occurred. The priest spoke to the choir as the congregation slowly stumbled and shuffled from the chapel.

“The service of Confirmation will be held in a month, and it will be the first time in several years. The Archbishop of New York will conduct the service, my children, and I know that you will do your best. I shall give you all the practice I can between now and the day of the service.”

He spoke to Maggie Thorley after the

others had gone. "You sang very finely. You did very well indeed. I am glad that you are one of the choir, and I am sure that the Archbishop will be much better impressed." The flash of joy on her young face moved him. "Poor things! How a little well-earned praise lightens their lot!" he murmured to himself, and then said: "I did not say this before the others, for they, too, have done their best, and I would not hurt their feelings, but I may say to you that you are the finest singer that the choir, within my experience, has had."

That night, as Maggie, lying sleeplessly on her cot, went over and over the words that the priest had said, an idea, full of trembling hope, suddenly flashed upon her. "The Archbishop will be impressed! The Archbishop will be impressed! Did not the priest say so?" At first she harbored the new ambition with timorous doubt, but after a while it remained insistently with her.

"The Archbishop is coming, and will hear the music. The priest tells me I sing well, and Dan always told me I had a fine voice. Why can I not sing so well before

the Archbishop that he will notice me and be pleased? Then, through the good priest, will not the Archbishop let me get a place to sing in a New York church? Then I should be near Annie again. Maybe, as I would of course be earning some money, Dan and she would let me live with them. And I should never, never have to think of this Island again!"

During the next month she devoted herself to the practice of music with an intensity that amazed and puzzled the priest. She did not make a confidant of him, for while she did not fear that he would ridicule her ambition, she dreaded that at least he might try to check it, and that he would speak of the uselessness of making such an attempt as she had determined upon. It would be time enough to tell him of her hopes after the Archbishop should have heard her. She felt sure that, at the fateful service, she would far outdo her previous efforts. Was she not improving every day?

She sang while seated beside her cot. She sometimes sang on the bench beside the door. Often, she awoke in the night

and softly hummed the tunes. Once in a while she was cursed for making a noise. At other times she was laughed at. But her voice was so pathetically sweet that a check rarely came to her. And as day after day passed by, the hope that she would succeed before the Archbishop became more and more of a certainty.

The fateful day arrived. She was herself to be one of those to receive Confirmation, as her parents had neglected to have the rite performed when she was young. Like the numerous other Almshouse women who were to be of the Confirmation class, she was given a white veil and a kerchief of white to wear over her coarse gown of blue serge.

The bell in the little green-slatted cupola, on the top of the weather-beaten building, rang forth its summons to the worshippers, but long before this the chapel was almost full, so early had the institution inmates begun to gather. The blind had been led. The infirm had been carried on stretchers or in chairs. Many had hobbled and crept, with frequent rests. Many had been helped by their less disabled

companions. Ambulances and hospital wagons had borne some. The people were not altogether from the various buildings that collectively make up the Almshouse, for a number came from the Metropolitan Hospital, and some Workhouse prisoners swung down, in marching lines, in the care of keepers.

The tin vessels, just inside the entrances, for the holy water, were soon dipped empty, for the Almshouse dwellers like a generous quantity of whatever promises to do them good, and the lame man whose duty it was to keep the vessels filled had forgotten about them while he was open-mouthedly intent on watching for the coming of the Archbishop. It was pitiful to see the poor creatures groping in the dry vessels for the water that they could not find.

The organist, thrilling with pride that he with difficulty repressed, had thoughts only for the time that he could sound the first notes, and he was oblivious to the four singers, who, he was firmly convinced, had very little to do with the real music, after all. But the one-eyed basso not only

watched closely the entire scene of the Archbishop's entrance, but whisperingly kept the blind tenor and soprano informed of all that was passing.

Glorious and brilliant, in cope and surplice and stole of cloth of gold, and with a golden mitre upon his head, and in his hand a golden crozier, the Archbishop stood before those miserable twelve hundred people, who packed the chapel to the very doors, and in the silence that fell upon the assembly he could hear the piteous appeals of still others, outside, who were begging to be allowed to go in.

The organ pealed; the choir sang; the coarse-clad men and women bowed their heads. On the women's side there were rows on rows of hoods of brownish-gray, with a sprinkling of the white veils of those who were to be confirmed. On the side of the men a similar effect was produced by the many heads of white among the grizzled and brown and black.

The choir sang, and never was singing more sad. The organist, in the overplus of his enthusiasm, made the old organ blare, from time to time, with laborious respira-

tions. The tenor, eager and excited, piped high-pitchedly out of tune. The alto could not keep the wheezes from sometimes creeping in. The basso droned valiantly, but could not always hold his breaking voice in check. With blind face upraised, Maggie Thorley sang, and as she sang she thought of freedom and escape, and of the other life that this singing was to bring to her. Mercifully, she was too ignorant of really fine music, and too much wrapped up in herself, to realize how poor was the choir's singing. Wonderful it was, considering who the singers were, and the disadvantages under which they labored, but pitifully destitute of beauty from any other stand-point. Maggie, indeed, sang well, but in the inharmonious discordance her part escaped attention. The choir sat down in a proud flutter.

"How does the Archbishop look?" whispered Maggie.

"He looks as if there were tears in his eyes," replied the one-eyed man.

Into the big square room, with its white-washed walls, the hot sun streamed, through the bare windows, turning into

yellow insignificance the many lights that blazed on the altar. The incense from the swinging censers tickled the noses of the feeble old folks in the front pews, and they coughed and sneezed in thrilled and guilty enjoyment. The sun's rays threw into bright relief the series of colored pictures on the walls, representing scenes connected with the crucifixion: "Jesus carries the Cross," "Jesus falls the first time," "Jesus falls the second time," "Jesus falls the third time," "Veronica wipes the face of Jesus." The group of old soldiers, veterans of the Civil War, made an impressive group, where they sat together near the middle of the room.

The Archbishop rose again, and there was infinite pity in his face as his eyes swept over the rows and rows of unfortunates, packed close in the long and narrow pews, stiff and straight-backed, of yellow wood. In the splendor of his apparel, that in the minds of the tensely awe-struck congregation transformed the bare chapel into something that approached the glory of Heaven, he spoke of the poverty of Jesus, of how he had no place to lay his head, of how the

fowls of the air and the beasts of the field were better housed ; and as he spoke, so gently and sympathetically, of how Jesus had deliberately chosen poverty for his lot, men and women bowed their heads and many quietly wept.

Again and again did the choir sing, but



the raucous bass, the shrilling tenor, the wheezing alto and the croaking organ grew gradually worse. Maggie's clear voice was vibrant with the sorrow and hope that stirred her.

“ *Stabat Mater dolorosa,
Juxta crucem lachrymosa,
Dum pendebat Filius.*”

She did not know what the words meant, but the Archbishop felt, as she sang them, that they thrilled with unspeakable emotion.

Maggie herself, as one to receive the administered rite, was at length led from her place in the gallery, down the steep stairway, and between the crowded pews to the front of the big room, where, burning and shivering from the fever of hope and fear, she knelt on the steps of the altar. Other men and other women knelt beside her, and from one to another the Archbishop slowly passed, touching them with his own hands, placing upon their brows the consecrated oil, and praying over each with loving gentleness. Maggie felt his touch, she listened to the formal words of the ceremony as in a dream, and then he passed to the next one, and her head dropped forward into her hands as she prayed in an agony of supplication.

All at length was over. The choir, without the voice of Maggie to aid them, sang again. There was the solemn chiming of the Elevation of the Host. There was the benediction. There was the scraping,

shuffling, murmuring medley that marked the slow out-passing of the congregation. Yet still Maggie waited, still she prayed, bowed before the altar, and with her face still covered with her hands. She was not noticed, for there was a sprinkling of others, also waiting, some in the pews and some on the altar-steps, and they watched with wistfulness as the flaring candles were one by one extinguished.

The Archbishop and the Jesuit came out from behind the altar, stood for a few moments, and then passed slowly by where Maggie knelt. Neither of them noticed or recognized her.

“Your choir interested me greatly,” said the Archbishop, and Maggie well knew that it was his voice, for she had listened with strained eagerness to every word uttered in the service by the great dignitary whose favor was to mean so much to her. As he spoke of the choir she almost shrieked with delirious joy.

“They have worked hard,” said the priest. “I am glad that they interested you.”

“But I never heard anything so pitiful,”

continued the Archbishop. His voice was very low, but Maggie was listening with an intensity that could not miss a syllable.

“Poor things! How hard you must have worked in training them! But it was so unutterably sad. It was painful to listen to them.”

They passed on. Maggie’s head sank lower. She could no longer even pray.

THE PROMOTION OF BERKWATER

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THE story of Berkwater was one that impressed me by its striking incidents.

He was a veteran of the Civil War, and yet no one, witnessing his trembling incertitude, his humbleness, as he crept about Blackwell's, could have guessed that he had ever been a soldier. To think of his having been an officer would have seemed grotesquely absurd.

His story came to me oddly enough, and without any effort on my part—a bit here, a bit there, a fact, an inference, a word—and at length the final link that clasped the whole together. There was a certain fascination in watching the unexpected development of the chain of circumstances.

Berkwater is dead now. And it is an additional feature of the strange story that

he and Elinor Linndale died on the same day. He was not old when he died. He was but a little more than sixty. But for so many years he had gone decrepitly about, forever maundering about having told Sherman something—just what, he was quite unable to explain—that he had come to be looked upon as an old, old man.

At the beginning of the Civil War, Berkwater's home was in Chicago. He was a man of good family, a rising lawyer, affable, popular, and had a host of friends. In the second year of the war he secured a lieutenant's commission in an Illinois regiment, and went to the front, eager for fame and glory.

And yet, dearer to him than the highest glory was the love of Elinor Linndale. She was the daughter of a wealthy merchant. She was brilliantly attractive, and Berkwater, with a certain shyness that seemed foreign to his character—for he appeared to be dashing and bold—paid court to her. Believing, at length, that she had begun to care for him in return, he decided to risk his fate before leaving, with his regiment, for the war.

But when, resplendent in his new uniform, and with pride and love and hope glowing in his face, he actually stood before her, he feared to venture. How could he be so vain as to think that this charming girl cared for him above all the world? What had he done to show his worthiness? No. He must first win fame. Then he would come and try to win her.

And so he could only say, lamely, and with a flushing face, as he held her hand for a moment at parting :

“ I have something very, very particular to say to you. I cannot say it now, as I had hoped to. But on my first furlough I shall ask you to listen to me, and I can only hope that you will listen with favor.”

And with that he was gone, and both of them believed that it was only modesty or shyness, and not fear, that made him hesitate.

His military career began auspiciously. By the charm of his personality, combined with commendable though by no means brilliant service, he won the good-will of his superior officers, and was advanced to

the rank of captain, and then to that of major.

At Chickamauga came a brilliant opportunity. His regiment had been stubbornly fighting, near the old mill that, close-hemmed by trees, stood by the creek across which much of the battle surged back and forth. Hard pressed by a body of the enemy, who were pouring a deadly fire from behind a barricade of logs, and making the position of the regiment intolerable, Berkwater led a flank attack upon them with desperate bravery. The little body of men that followed his wild rush dashed, with him, over the hostile barricade, and killed or scattered the enemy who had fought from behind it.

Not only was it an act of supreme bravery, to thus lead men on such a forlorn hope, but the effect of the dash was to allow a large body of Federal troops to retire in safety from a position that would have meant annihilation.

Berkwater trembled, in the reaction that followed his deed, and his face was very white as his colonel galloped up and shouted: "Splendidly done, major!"

And his face was very pale, and he was very silent, when afterward he received the compliments of his brother officers. His men were warm in his praise, and his reputation for daring spread through the corps.

Berkwater's colonel was, like himself, a Chicago man, and he not only was well acquainted with the Linndales, but knew, also, that Berkwater was a suitor of Elinor's. He felt great pride in his brave and handsome major, and as soon as possible secured him a furlough.

"You haven't asked for it, but I don't know of anyone who better deserves it, or who would take pleasanter advantage of it," he said, cordially.

Berkwater could not decline the furlough, thus warmly offered. As a matter of fact, he was by no means ready to go to Chicago. He was not ready to speak to Elinor. And yet, should he decline the furlough, he knew that the Linndales would be very likely to hear of it, through their friend, the colonel, and in that case there could be but one explanation in Elinor's mind. And so, with apparent

pleasure, he accepted the furlough, and started for home.

Berkwater knew that in Elinor's character pride was the strongest factor. He knew how profound was her nature, and of what a depth of love she was capable, but that strongest of all was her pride.

The war had intensely aroused her, and she watched every phase of the great struggle with absorbed interest. She felt a pride in the successes of the army, and a still deeper and keener pride in the career of Allen Berkwater, for she knew that he loved her, and that she loved him in return. She entered into the work of the Sanitary Commission, and unweariedly devoted herself to it; and watched, meanwhile, the reports that told of Berkwater's progress. She learned of his splendid conduct at Chickamauga, and glowed with pride and joy. She knew what she would tell him when he should return, on his first furlough, and ask her—

But when he stood before her, she could scarcely realize that it was really he. This man, with his eyes sunken, his face haggard and drawn, and with an aspect that

was stern as with some strange resolve ! The explanation came with sharp abruptness, after the first few words of talk and greeting.

“ You think me brave. I have won



praise for my conduct at Chickamauga. But it is all a mistake—worse than a mistake ! Nobody has suspected my secret, but it is due to you that you know it. I was a coward ! When they thought I was so brave, I was actually running away, and

fought when I saw that I could not help myself, as the men crowded after me in the rush!"

Elinor's pride was too deeply stung for her to recognize that in making this avowal, so that she would not accept him under false appearances, Berkwater was showing bravery of a rare order. Nor was she able to see that there was a change in the man: that his character had been strengthened, and purified of much of its dross. Her pride was dominant, and blinded her to considerations that love alone might have heeded. And Berkwater went back to the army, a heart-broken man.

His regiment had been transferred to the command of General Sherman, who was carefully preparing for the Georgia campaign. When Berkwater rejoined the army, and reported for duty, his colonel greeted him with cordial warmth, and then said:

"Major Berkwater, let me be the first to congratulate you. General Sherman has learned of your bravery at Chickamauga; and, in filling some vacancies and preparing for a campaign that is likely to

prove of vital importance, has decided to give you a colonelcy. I shall be sorry to lose you from my own command, but I am heartily glad that this promotion has come to you."

Berkwater was so elated that for a moment he forgot that his advancement could no longer mean anything to Elinor. He pictured to himself how proud she would be, and then came the swift remembrance that all was over between them.

Soon, too, came another reflection, that turned him hot and cold by turns, and made him only abstractedly continue the conversation with his colonel, to whose friendship and whose representations to Sherman the new promotion was due.

Out upon the Chattanooga streets went Berkwater, and there he restlessly wandered up and down. Night had fallen, and in the great camp that filled and overflowed the town there was quiet, save for now and then a burst of laughter from some tent, the steady beat of the sentries pacing their rounds, the challenge and response of pedestrians, or the hasty gallop of some orderly through the streets.

Berkwater made his resolution, and then walked firmly to the headquarters of General Sherman and asked to be admitted to his presence. Sherman, deeming that only a matter of importance could prompt a call at such an hour, ordered that he be admitted.

Berkwater entered. Before the general's penetrating glance he quailed. He looked fixedly at that face of grizzled firmness which, though kindly, showed immovability in every line, and for a moment he hesitated.

"Well, sir?" The words came with sharp impatience, quick and stern.

"General Sherman, I understand that I am to be commissioned a colonel for bravery."

"This is very unusual conduct, sir. Well?"

Berkwater stood very straight and very pale. He spoke with nervous quickness.

"I don't want the commission, sir. I—I don't deserve it. I ought not to have had any credit. I—I was a coward. I was running away."

Sherman's countenance was inscrutably

grave and watchful, yet there was a touch of human interest somehow apparent—a touch of pity—and when he said, curtly, “Tell me about it,” the young man told him the whole miserable tale, concealing nothing of his shameful fright.

The general listened in silence till the story was ended, and then continued to look fixedly at the young fellow, who stood, wretchedly expectant, before him.

“There,” said Sherman, pointing to a paper that lay on the table, “is the commission that was intended for you.”

Berkwater miserably bowed. Sherman arose, walked slowly to the table, and took the commission thoughtfully in his hand. He held it toward Berkwater.

“Take it!”

The young man took it in dazed astonishment.

“Major Berkwater—Colonel Berkwater—the commission is yours. You have been tried in as severe an ordeal as a battle, and have not been found wanting. Yet I realize that, while you have thus shown yourself morally brave, it is possible for you again to fail physically as you

failed before. See to it that you do not! Do not make me regret that I have taken this course! I trust you—and there must be no wavering! In the coming campaign I shall see that you have a chance to show what kind of soldier you really are."

Completely overcome, Berkwater began to stammer a reply, but Sherman interrupted him. "Not a word more. And now, leave me, for I am very busy."

In the Atlanta campaign, that followed, Berkwater was indeed given ample opportunity to show that his cowardice had vanished and that he was a changed man. His regiment took part in many battles amid those Georgia hills and pine forests. With difficulty at first, but afterward with the self-command that comes to a spirit victorious over itself, he exposed himself freely—too freely, as some thought—and on every occasion acted with intrepid courage. His men idolized him, and were ready to follow him anywhere.

After the Battle of Atlanta he wrote to Elinor. He told her, with frank manliness, that he had not ceased to think of her and to love her, and that he had be-

gun to hope, in spite of her decision against him, that there might still be a chance to win her regard. He told her that he was a changed man, that he was sure the tendency to cowardice had been overcome, that General Sherman himself had complimented him in General Orders. Would she not forget the past?

Her reply was brief.

“I am sincerely glad that the change has come, but there is still something that I cannot bring myself to overlook. I read in the papers that you received your promotion as colonel on account of your conduct at Chickamauga. It was your duty, as it seems to me, to tell General Sherman of the actual circumstances, and then wait for your promotion till you could receive it without concealing anything. It is a bitter question to ask—but how can I be sure that your career since then has not also been owing to chance?”

The cold injustice of the letter hurt him keenly. He could not know that she still cared for him, and that it was the struggle between her pride and her affec-

tion that had resulted in such a harshly written note. Berkwater never suspected how Elinor suffered from the triumph of her own pride. He wrote no reply to her, for his own pride was too deeply touched by her unfair judging of the case against him.

It was but a few days after the receipt of her letter that, in a fierce skirmish near Jonesboro, Berkwater was desperately wounded and left on the field. He was cut across the face with a sabre, and a bullet went through his neck, at the very base of the brain. His body was stripped and plundered while he lay unconscious, and when he was afterwards taken from the field and carried away a prisoner, the bullet wound had caused such a benumbing palsy of the senses that he could not even tell his own name. There was no suspicion that he was an officer, and he was sent to Andersonville prison.

He had been seen by his own soldiers to fall, badly wounded; and as he was never afterward heard from it became generally believed that he must be dead. Elinor Linndale read of his disappearance,

and later, through his former colonel, learned that hope of ever hearing from him had been given up, and that it was looked upon as certain that he was dead.

In spite of her grief, she could not but feel a relief that the man she had loved was forever beyond the possibility of disgracing himself. No suspicion that she had misjudged him ever came to her.

Berkwater was released at the close of the war, and sent to the North, a wreck. Landing at New York, he was not sent to a military home or hospital, for he was quite unable to give any explanation of himself, and there were no papers upon him such as the formalities of the time required before a military institution would open its red-taped doors.

He was gentle, quiet, and needed but little attention. He was sent to Bellevue Hospital, and there remained for a long time, attracting the kind attention of the surgeons by his simple helplessness. Under their care he came at length to remember that his name was Berkwater, but what his first name was, what was his

history, or who were his friends, he was quite unable to tell, even after the most careful and patient questioning.

"I was promoted, but I told Sherman all about it," he would say. And then he would add, with strange earnestness, "Yes, I told Sherman all about it."

At all other times his talk was confined altogether to the simplest matters of his daily life and surroundings. The past was blotted out, save for the vague memory that his few words about Sherman represented.

In the course of time it became necessary to transfer him to Blackwell's Island, and he became an inmate of the Almshouse, on the ground that medical and surgical care could not benefit him, and that the cots of the city's hospitals ought to be occupied only by those whom the doctors could help.

In the Almshouse he then remained, growing gray and bent and feeble, and from time to time being led by one of the group of old soldiers among the inmates to a meeting of Friendless Post, where he seemed to get into his poor vacant mind

that the men about him were veterans. He would sit beside them, in drowsy patience, for hours, and once in a while would pipe out, feebly :

“ I told Sherman about it. I was promoted, but I told General Sherman.”

Many years thus passed. And one day a party of ladies, a committee from an association for the amelioration of the condition of the poor, visited Blackwell’s Island, and were shown through the various institutions. At the Almshouse they were particularly interested, and asked to be led through every building and every ward, even where lay the sick.

Into one of the sick-wards poor Berkwater had been carried the week before. The ladies reached that ward, and were met by the surgeon in charge.

“ I feel deeply interested in these unfortunates, Dr. Clark,” said the gray-haired chairman of the committee. “ Ever since making my home in this city, three years ago, I have planned to visit this island, and yet this is the first time that I have gotten over here.”

“ You will find the study very interest-

ing, Miss Linndale," returned the doctor; "but it will be affecting as well. Look at that poor fellow—the one with the great scar across his face. No one knows who he is. He hobbles around the Island, when he is well enough to be out. He



has been here for many years. He wants to be cheerful and helpful, and can tell absolutely nothing of his own past or of his friends. He may live for years yet, and without any change."

"Poor fellow!" said Elinor Linndale; while Allen Berkwater, realizing that he

was the subject of conversation, piped shrilly as the party passed beyond him:

“I told Sherman about it. Yes, I was promoted! But I told General Sherman!”

ON CHERRY HILL

ON CHERRY HILL

“ **J**ENNIE! Jennie! For the love o’ Heaven, Jennie! Give me the kid !”

But Jennie laughed shrilly, and continued her stumbling walk, while her old mother, bareheaded, and with thin wisps of gray hair fluttering in the night wind, followed close behind. Hoarsely, and with supplicative iteration, she continued to beg for the child, heedless of the drizzling rain that was steadily falling.

“ Jennie! Jennie! For the love o’ Heaven !” But Jennie was not to be touched by appeals to either the love of Heaven or of her child. The little thing was less than a year old, and she carried it alternately by an arm, a leg, or its body, and it was too dumbly frightened to cry. Jennie was not very drunk, but she walked unsteadily, and all the obstinacy of her nature had been developed.

The old woman touched her arm. "Jennie!" But the girl turned fiercely upon her, and the mother retreated, shrinking.

"I'm looking for Pete! I'm going to give the kid to him." The words were uttered loudly, and with a distinct air of defiance toward the little crowd that was following. Some of the people tried to laugh, with knowing intonation, but the laugh soon died away.

Past old doorways, with fan-shaped windows above and columns on either side—for in these dismally dilapidated tenements wealth and social eminence once dwelt—Jennie slowly swung. There were houses of irregular height, standing at irregular angles with the sidewalks. There were threateningly dark passage-ways, leading to other and dingier tenements in the rear. Past the end of the street an elevated train noisily rattled. From the great bridge, above, swinging on its huge curve toward Brooklyn, came the rumble of trains and the clangor of gongs. Far aloft there glowed electric lights that twinkled hopefully through the rain, and Jennie,

glancing up, was impressed for a moment, vaguely, as if by the possibility of something bright but unattainable. Below, on Cherry Hill, dim street-lamps shone miserably in the gloom. Saloon lights cut broad swaths in the dismal darkness, and contrasted with the gloom of open-doored halls and the dark passage-ways.

Jennie—"Handsome Jennie," as she was called—was scarcely more than eighteen, and her eyes were luminously dark, her figure neat and trim. She swung past a lamp-post, and let the baby's body strike against it. The little thing whimpered, whereupon Jennie dashed her hand against its cheek. It stopped its whimper, and Jennie said, with a wild laugh :

"Pete used to say it made too much noise. I didn't know how to stop it then."

She bumped it against a house stoop. The crowd, composed though it was of the worst elements of Cherry Hill, was very silent. It takes a good deal to awe Cherry Hill, but Cherry Hill was awed. Still, no one interfered. It is a part of New York where it is not customary to interfere in strictly family affairs.

“ Jennie! For the love o’ Heaven!
Give me the kid!”

But the girl only repeated: “I’m going to find Pete, and give the kid to him!” Then, twisting and twirling the child in her arms, she began to sing. It was a plaintive love-song, but her voice made her listeners shiver. She brought the child up in front of her with a jerk of one of its pipe-stem legs, and deliberately scratched its cheek. The scratches were not deep, but the blood came. There was a remonstrant murmur from the crowd, and the old mother tugged at her daughter’s arm and shrieked. The girl again turned fiercely, and again the mother shrank back, while her shriek died away in a maundering moan. No one thought of the police, for on Cherry Hill they are never sent for, but only come when uninvited.

Jennie held the child in the light of a saloon window, and said, with dull calmness: “Pete said it was just a white-faced little thing. I wonder what he’ll think of it now.”

“Can’t somebody find Pete and get this thing stopped?” said one of the men, and

at this a girl laughed jeeringly. "If you want to find Pete you needn't look where Jennie is! He's off with—"

But another girl checked her. "Don't let her hear that. Her heart's broke a'ready."

Jennie reached the top of the low slope. Directly above her hung an arch of the mighty bridge. On the very spot where a great abutment towered, there had stood the first presidential mansion occupied by George Washington after his inauguration. Jennie had never heard of Washington, but the darkly massive pile of stone, contrasting with the old tenements and the garish lights, somehow impressed her. The little crowd formed in a semicircle, and watched her, silently. In that open space there had stood, generations before, the grove of cherry-trees that had given the once delightful spot its name. From that spot, down to the East River, where now were narrow streets crowded with tenements, there had swept the finely kept grounds of early residents.

Jennie leaned against the massive abutment that marked the site of Washington's

home, and might have fancied that there was a grave and quieting influence there, for she grew calm, and held the baby close, and softly wept over it. The watching crowd grew more still.



There was a sudden stir, and a cry of astonishment. "Here's Pete!" And a young man pushed his way to the front. He looked at none of those who fell back on either hand, but walked straight up to the girl, who stood, rigid and with parted lips, staring at him.

"Jennie, let me have that kid!"

She started, and held its bleeding face closer against her breast. "I dasent. You'd hurt it!" And then she furtively wiped its cheek with the sleeve of her cheap gown.

“Give me the kid!” With a dry sob she handed it to him. The couple stood, with the child between them, and the hands of both were touching it. Remorse and tenderness were in the eyes of one, while love and longing shone, frightened, from those of the other.

The policeman on post came briskly up, and with him was a clergyman who was on his way to his home in one of the “settlement houses” that dot the great East Side. He was a man who had devoted himself to work in the tenements, and Pete at once recognized him.

“Mister, me an’ Jennie wants to get married, and was just wonderin’ where we’d find you. And we’d like it done right now, sir, if you please.”

The clergyman was one of those rare men who, a worker among the poor and wretched, really understood those among whom he labored. He saw that it was not a case for delay. He took off his hat. The policeman, at the risk of being seen by a roundsman, removed his helmet. Every man in the crowd stood with uncovered head. The young couple joined

hands, and the policeman took the baby, letting it play with his night-stick to keep it still. The drizzling rain turned to a heavy shower, but no one heeded it.

“Whom God hath joined together,” said the minister, solemnly; and when the brief ceremony was over Pete took the child from the policeman’s arms and handled it with awe.

Jennie laughed happily. “Let me take it! You’ll drop it!”

It cooed up in her face, and she kissed it passionately. Then Cherry Hill went in out of the rain.

A PROPOSAL DURING SHIVA

A PROPOSAL DURING SHIVA

A ROOM on the third floor of a tumble-down old structure on Orchard Street; a building of frame; and it stood there tremulously, with its façade pitched forward as with the stoop of an old man, and its coat of gray faded and streaked into shabbiness, and its little eyes, looking from two old dormers, dull and bleared.

Two flights of trembling stairs led to the room. It was broad and low, around it stood cases filled with books and manuscripts, and here and there were a few small tables and some chairs. On a low stool at one side, and sitting very stiff and very straight, was little Selma Weidberg. The room was lighted by lamps, that burned but dimly, and made the old men who were poring over the books and parchments, over the Talmud and the volumes of Jewish law and rabbinical lore, peer closely to decipher the words.

Thick dark hair, beards of great length, of gray or of mingled gray and black, eyes that glowed with soft mysteriousness, lit by inner-burning fires, fingers tenuous, almost claw-like, from the constant touching and handling of crumbly pages: and Selma looked at the skull-capped men, as grave and as thoughtful as they, while the old men, glancing back at her, smiled in kindliness, for it was pleasant to them to see her there. The glow of the lamps left their patriarchal faces half in shadow and half in light, and gave lambent lustres to sheets of olden yellow, and left shadows in the distant corners of the ample, low-ceiled room; shadows that were almost terrifying, in their grotesque mystery, when Selma, as a very little child, first began to visit there and to occupy that stool.

Some of the men were rabbis; Jewish priests and teachers; all were known as rabbis in the loose nomenclature of the East Side, for all were students, and wrapped up in Jewish lore, even though they daily followed unpretending vocations. The father of Selma kept a little shop where he sold second-hand clothes,



Their patriarchal faces half in shadow.

and he had several agents who went through the city, buying cast-off garments for little or nothing.

Abraham Weidberg was younger than the other men who frequented the book-room, and his air of solemn dignity was to quite an extent gained through association with his companions, who were more learned and more venerable than he, studious and wise though he was.

It was only once in a while that Selma was allowed to accompany her father on his visits to the room, and to these occasions she looked forward with the keenest expectation and enjoyed them with rapturous delight, though she sat so still on the little stool that the old men, who looked so kindly at her, thought she must surely be wearied.

The building, in spite of its dilapidation, was still strong. It was built with the stoutest flooring, and with huge oaken beams, and bade fair to outlast many a fresh and pretentious upstart of brick that, thin-walled and weak-girdered, had arisen near it. And because the building was still strong, in spite of its age and its

apparent weakness, the second floor was used as a hall, where societies met, and where, at times, there were gatherings of the garment workers, of one or another of the many classes, of the great East Side. Partitions had been taken down, and a stage erected at one end, and mirrors placed completely around the sides. These mirrors were the delight of the people who met there, for they reflected the large number actually present, and the large low room, into a hall of stately dimensions, filled with a vast assemblage.

Through the thick floor there sometimes came up to the rabbis the sounds of shouts and cheers and stampings, but these annoyed the bearded men but little, for their ears were well accustomed to the noise and hum of the East Side, where there is no such thing as stillness, packed and congested and massed together as those tens of thousands of people are, in that most thickly populated portion of the entire world.

But little Selma heard and noticed the sounds, and her mind busied itself with speculations as to what those noisy men

were doing, down below her. And once in a while there came into the quiet book-room a young man who, as she vaguely understood, at times took part in those meetings that made so much of turmoil—a turmoil so in contrast with the quiet of the book-room.

Enoch Heimann was his name, and he was handsome and full of energy and enthusiasm. Quiet he always was, when in the book-room, but it was a quiet behind which lay potentialities of action. Even Selma, though but a little girl, could in some sort see that he was a strong man—a man of physical vigor, and strong in ardent mentality. He was a man made for action rather than for dreaming, and yet he was a dreamer too: and Selma came to look upon him with a sort of worshipping awe, as she did upon the patriarchal longbeards who were the regular *habitués* of the place.

He was broad-shouldered, and held himself very erect. His forehead was both high and broad, and over it his black hair obdurately clustered in short curls that he tried in vain to flatten. His eyes were

full and dark. He could talk with fluent ease, and had a way of touching the hearts and the understandings of his listeners. The bearded rabbis liked him, too, because he could listen, in long retentive silences, while they poured out for him the wisdom that they had garnered during their years of studious life. They liked him because he wanted to keep up the prosperity and strength of the Jewish people—wanted them to be both wise and great.

He was of poor parents. His father was a refugee from Russia, and had married, in New York, a handsome girl, the daughter of a Jew of Portugal. Enoch grew to manhood with a bitter dislike for the established order of things and for the rule of wealth. With his powerful mind, and his education (for his father had given him the best that the public schools of New York could offer), the young man might have made himself a favorite among a wealthy class. But he never attempted this. He looked on the Jews of wealth, such as those whose names he saw over scores of business establishments on Broadway, as being almost as fully aliens as if

they were not Jews. It was with the myriads of the Hebrews of the packed tenements that his soul was bound up.

Selma never knew just when it was that she first began to notice Enoch Heimann. He grew gradually into the girl's consciousness, as a part of the dreamy old room; and also, much as she admired him, as an element of threatened unrest. He, for his part, grew to like to see the child there. To his mind, touched with a leaven of poesy, the girl was a sort of guardian spirit there, with her eyes so big with wondering awe.

Sometimes, after poring over musty books, and talking with slow gravity with some rabbi, he would walk over to the little stool, and would speak gently to Selma; and she would answer with a brightening look, but also with a gravity that befitted the book-room, so dimly dusky with learning.

And one night he thought the girl looked sleepy—it was far past the hour at which Weidberg usually went home, on the nights that Selma was with him—and Heimann told him that he would take the girl to her mother, as he himself lived near

their home, which was on Stanton Street. And the girl put her hand trustfully in his, and went away with him ; like a child, indeed, and yet, so Heimann thought, in some ways more like a woman.

After that, as the months and years crept by, Enoch kept up the habit of, once in a while, walking home with the girl ; and Selma grew to young womanhood, with Enoch thus a part of her life.

It never seemed strange to her that this big and handsome man should have established himself as a sort of guardian. Nothing seemed strange to her that came from the duskily lighted room where were the books of Jewish history and law, and the bearded rabbis. Sometimes, sitting on her stool, she would pore over some huge book, and then talk quaintly about it as Enoch led her home. It was often strange old Talmudic tales, full of dramatic narrative or of humor, that she read, and the people and the happenings in the stories were as real to her as what she saw about her on the crowded streets. And in those streets she saw much of beauty—beauty of sound and of sight. Where, for example,

Enoch saw a woman toiling through the street, bending beneath a huge bundle of sewing, for which, he knew, she would receive, perhaps, no more than twenty-five cents, Selma saw the curve of the woman's shoulders as having an odd gracefulness, and she noted the contrasting colors of her gown and shawl, and it made an attractive picture in her eyes. The lights in the shop windows, the shouts of the children, the rumble and murmur of it all, were parts of a pleasant show, in which, walking demurely with big Enoch, she could herself be a part. Her father was well to do, her home was comfortable, she was kind-hearted and impulsive to help, but her parents had kept her, as much as possible, from the knowledge of actual misery. Her dreamy connection with the book-room and the rabbis lent a marked touch of unreality to her life.

Enoch liked Abraham Weidberg, for he recognized in the man a practical shrewdness that, so it seemed to him, might be turned to good account in a movement for the bettering of the condition of the tenement Hebrews.

As Selma approached young womanhood, and her visits to the room of the rabbis almost ceased, she came to prize the evenings on which Enoch looked in at their home. Her father and Enoch discussed with eager enthusiasm problems of life and possible reforms; while her mother, a fine-looking, sombre-eyed woman, sat mostly silent. Selma, equally silent, sat by her side, and each was usually engaged in sewing on some homely household garment.

Rebecca Weidberg was a Galician Jewess, and among Selma's earliest recollections were those connected with the huge wig that her mother wore; for the staid Jewish woman had yielded unquestioningly, at her marriage, to the iron rule that required—as it had required of the women of her branch of Hebrews for centuries—that the hair of a bride be clipped or shaven close.

There gradually became more and more fixed in Selma's mind, a feeling of deep love for her people and her religion, but there also came a sad feeling that there was something stronger in life—that her

religion and her people must remain in the condition from which Enoch Heimann was so anxious to free them. Following the idea of Enoch, she had come to think of her race as comprising only the thousands who struggled with the problems of life in the tenement districts: the rich Hebrews of the city were not of them: she began to learn the misery of the tenements, too, and her heart overflowed with commiseration.

She was educated at the public school of her district, and sent for two terms to a large musical school on the East Side, where she, and many like her, were for low fees taught to play and sing. Weidberg even purchased a piano for her (in many of the tenements there are pianos or flutes or violins), and in a simple way she could play. Enoch liked to hear her, and usually, after the discussion of social problems with the father, he would ask that Selma play, whereupon the girl would shyly do so.

What, more than anything else, gave Selma the feeling that her race and her religion must yield to other forces, came

to her through her visits to the old Jewish burying-ground on West Eleventh Street. When she was a very little girl, her father

led her far over there, on the opposite side of the city from where she lived, and he pointed out what was left of the burying-ground, and she peered between the iron bars of the fence in reverential awe. Buildings closely hemmed in the triangular bit of ground, crowded with time-stained stones, and her father told her that, although rich men were eager to buy the little bit of land, and willing to pay a great sum for it, no amount of money, however great, could purchase it, so strong was the enduring observance, on the part of the Hebrew sect, whose dead lay there, of their rule that no dead body should ever be removed, no burying-



ground desecrated. The roar of traffic from Sixth Avenue, which was but a few rods away, increased the reverence with which she regarded the infinitesimal triangle.

It was not till long afterward that she realized what gave her mind a more saddening bias. It came to her, one day, with a painful shock. It was, that part of the burying ground had already been removed!

“Yes,” her father said, “but that was for the street, my child. There had to be a street cut through, and of course the city took the necessary land.”

Selma could not understand how her father could look on the fact thus calmly. There, where graves had been, ran the smooth street, with its asphalt pavements, its stone sidewalks, its traffic, its wagons, its quick-stepping pedestrians. It was a thing for Jews to be proud of, that money could not purchase the patch that was left: but there was crushing inexorability in the fact that, after all, there was a power that could do as it pleased with it.

The smooth, hard streets, the iron power that had cut the burying-ground in twain,

appalled her. The idea fixed itself, and became, so she felt, ineradicable, that it is useless to fight against the power that exists, against things as they are. Much as she admired the handsome Enoch, she could only feel that he was in error when he talked of proposed reforms and changes and the altering of conditions. She thought of the remorselessness of the hard pavements, and of the crushing power of existing conditions.

And yet, although her feelings were thus enlisted against Enoch's views, she could not but feel a thrill of admiration when she heard him talk of uniting all of the Jews of the East Side in a great league—a league that should control labor, and prices, and hours of work, and should combine Hebrews of all trades and sects and nationalities.

She knew that she loved Enoch, but it was as if he were her brother. She had never had either a brother or sister, and Enoch had therefore the more easily incorporated himself with the most precious portion of her life.

Selma grew to be very beautiful, but

not with the beauty of her Jewish friends, or after the type of either of her parents. Her hair was brownish black. That, too, was the color of her eyes. Her face was dark, but of a creamy tint. Her nose was straight. Her mouth was sweet and firm. When she smiled, her face lit up in an exquisite glow. And Enoch came to love her dearly.

Frequently did he try to get her to take a share in the discussions, but rarely could she be induced to do so. She, like her mother, sat silent, and listened to the men.

Time passed, and, although Selma was still young, her mother began to think seriously of her marriage, and the girl's great beauty promised possibilities of marked advancement through the event. But Weidberg always checked her, with jealous crustiness, when she hinted at any change in Selma's way of life.

"The girl is happy with us; let that suffice," was all that he would say.

It was on a bright Summer afternoon that there came to Selma a poignant shock. She learned that her mother was ill, and that there was no hope for her recovery.

Mrs. Weidberg had never been strong, and an insidious disease had finally attacked her, and henceforth she was sure steadily to fail. The illness had come upon her some months before, but the fact had been kept from the daughter's knowledge till concealment was deemed no longer either possible or advisable.

With the knowledge of the fate that hung over her mother, there came to the girl an explanation of a change that she had noticed in Weidberg himself. His manner had been gradually altering. He had ceased to take delight in the discussion of abstruse points with his colleagues. He had come to dislike the presence of Enoch, and the young man found him petulant, dogmatic, and rude. There were times when the girl flushed for her father's conduct.

On several occasions Heimann, in pained mortification, left after the briefest possible call, and Weidberg would growl out, after his departure: "The man is tiresome. He is impertinent, too, in setting his ideas against those of his elders. Selma has always been right in liking the society and

the learning of elder men. The talk of that Heimann is like the sound of a shutter rattling in the wind."

Now Selma thought she understood the reason for her father's conduct: it must be because of his knowledge of the inevitable fate of his wife: and, thinking thus, the girl was very patient with him, and gave him more of love and tenderness.

The end came without warning, one dreary day, when neither the husband nor the daughter was at home, and the grief of the girl was something pitiful. Stolid and dry-eyed—but in his eyes there burned a lurid light—the man tried to comfort her. His nature had long since changed. Suddenly, with this affliction, his voice changed, and he spoke with a harsh rau-cousness, that he tried to make loving.

"Selma, it had to be. It is better that Rebecca thus ceased from sorrow and pain. Yes; it is better. But I shall make my Selma happy."

To his croaking consolation she could not reply. Friends came, and offered their services; the funeral was one of sober distinction; and then Selma and her father

returned to the house where death had come.

The period of mourning, the eight days of Shiva, began with a strange unrest on the part of the father, with a passion of weeping on the part of the child. In the front room, overlooking the crowds and the never-ceasing bustle of Stanton Street, the two sat. There was no other near of kin, and hence the two sat solitary.

“See!” said an Armenian woman, whose windows, across the street, commanded those of the Weidbergs. “See! The Jews sit without their shoes. All the day through, and day after day, they sit so. And they will not use the chairs, but are seated on the floor!”

Thus, indeed, as demanded by custom, did Abraham and Selma Weidberg sit in mourning. For hour after hour they wearily sat in the same room, only to separate at night, and take up the renewed vigil at dawn. When they ate, they either stood or remained seated on the floor. They could not go from the house until the days of Shiva were fully numbered.

Twelve acquaintances, the greater part

being rabbis from the book-room, came every evening and solemnly intoned prayers. The kindly old men tried to comfort the pair, and Selma's heart was lifted somewhat out of its sadness. They spoke gravely of the problems of death and immortality, and then with gentle kindness talked with the stricken girl.

The rabbis spoke of their comrade as they gathered in their dusky room. "He acts as if possessed of an evil spirit," said the grayest and oldest of them all, gloomily shaking his head.

"Yes, and did you not mark how his eyes glowed as if with fever, how his fingers twitched, and how his face burned hot?" said another.

Enoch went, taking off his shoes as he entered, and seating himself in sober sympathy. But Weidberg snapped at him, in sharpened words, and gibed and glowered; and the young man, pained and silent, went away. Selma barely looked at him, and he could not know how strongly she hoped he would overlook it all, and ascribe her father's conduct to his grief.

Day after day went slowly by. Once

in a while an acquaintance came in, and sat, shoeless and commiserating. On the morning of the sixth day Selma noticed that her father was more than ever flushed, more nerve-shaken, more unlike his former self. He sat silent, gazing straight down at the floor: and when at length he raised his eyes, and looked at her, they were red and bloodshot. He began to murmur, in mumbling words, and she caught a few disjointed sentences from the Song of Solomon:

“Behold, thou art fair, my love; thy lips are like a thread of scarlet; behold, thou art fair.”

There was another silence. Then came the word, hoarsely croaked:

“Selma!”

“Yes, my father.” The girl felt a sense of oppression.

“There is something, Selma, that I wish to tell you. Rebecca and myself spoke often of it. We wondered if you ought to know.”

He spoke clumsily, heavily, awkwardly. She did not reply, but looked at him in wonder. His face flushed more red. He

turned his eyes away, after shiftily trying to meet her glance.

“ You—you—were not our child. You were the child of parents who could not care for you. And—and—we were childless——”

He ended with an almost unintelligible mumble. She sat rigid, horror-struck. He moved restlessly, and slantwise turned his eyes on her. Her words came like a cry of pain.

“ Why, oh, why, do you tell me such a thing at such a time ? ”

“ Selma ! Have pity on me ; I could not wait—could not but speak. Jacob worked and waited for seven years, and then for still another seven ; but Jacob lived in an age when men counted their lifetime by centuries, and seven years was but a fragment. And I shall soon be getting old, my Selma ; and I felt that I must tell you—and must know——”

“ Must know ! ” she whispered. “ I—don’t—understand.” She shivered and shrunk away from him.

“ I want you to take the place—of—Rebecca,” he said, hoarsely.

The self-control of the girl broke down. "Oh, mother! Mother! For you were my mother! In all right you were—you were indeed!"

Weidberg hunched himself, meanly, and slunk a little away from her, with a craven gesture.



There was a knock at the door, and Enoch entered. Weidberg spoke to him with savage coarseness. "Why do you disturb us? How dare you intrude at such a time? Go!"

Without a word, Enoch went away.

The girl only wept. There, until night-fall, the two sat together; the man, with his head bowed and his face hidden; the girl, with her face buried in her hands, and her mind revolving humiliating thoughts.

“Those Jews!” observed the Armenian woman. “They are so strange! Their grief is greater than at the beginning!”

The final days of Shiva were a time of unspeakable horror to Selma. Weidberg sat in self-condemnatory misery. He did not blame himself for caring for Selma. That, he thought, was proper. But he was stung with fierce self-loathing that, hurried on by the warmth of his passion, he should have spoken to her in such a way and at such a time. And he knew that Selma loathed him.

From the moment of his announcement that she was not their child, she felt that she must none the less sit out the appointed days of mourning. Rebecca Weidberg had been as a loving mother to her. She would not shrink from giving her memory the fullest measure of respect, even though she must have Weidberg beside her.

Hour after hour, and without exchanging a word between them, they sat through what was left of the time of Shiva. He watched her, at times, furtively, hungrily, hopelessly. She sat in black misery. When friends came quietly in and sat to mourn with them, the two spoke in the briefest possible way, and the friends sorrowfully sympathized with them in what seemed only the deepest grief. Toward the close of the eighth day Weidberg said, huskily :

“I was wrong, Selma. It was a painful mistake that I made. But I meant to treat you only with honor. And I forgot myself and made a sad mistake.”

She flashed a look of scorn at him. He quailed under it, but went on :

“I will treat you the best I can. Your mother—your real mother—is alive. I can tell you where you may find her.”

“Do not tell me! She cast me off! This—this was my real mother! Tell me nothing of the other! I would not go near her, for either a crust of bread or a drop of water or a word of comfort! Say nothing to me of her!”

"Of course, then, you will stay with me, here——"

"With you! Not a moment! Not an instant, after the time of Shiva is ended!"

Her vehemence amazed him, but he pulled himself together, sat more erect, and spoke more calmly. His manliness was coming back. His dream was over.

"I feared you would not, though I hoped you would. Well, I shall see to it that, whatever you plan to do, you will not suffer for my moment of weakness. You need not even see me again, if you continue to hate me. I can wait till you forgive me. Meanwhile, I shall send, to any friend with whom you wish to stay, enough of money to keep you in happiness and comfort."

"Money! And from you! Not a cent!" the girl flashed out. "I will not touch your money! You shall not even know where I am!"

"You must think better of all this," he responded, gravely. "I made a mistake. I shall suffer for it. But you must let me help you and care for you."

But when the time of Shiva was con-

cluded, Selma went away. Weidberg, in dumb misery, watched her as she made her little preparations.

“ You will not tell me where you are going? ”

“ No. I cannot. I—I thank you for your years of care. And—I am sorry that it must be so hard a farewell. But it must be good-by.”

“ Selma! I beg of you, do not go out into the world alone. Do not make me responsible for that! ” cried Weidberg. “ You are trying to punish me! But do not go alone! It is an awful world! You need never see me, but take money—take it—and say that you will send for more! ”

Selma softened a little toward him, yet did not for a moment falter in her determination. Her own firmness, her set resolve, astonished and almost frightened her. She was glad of the strength that enabled her to hold to the way that she had marked out, and yet, when it came to the actual moment of leaving, she could not but feel some sympathy with the man who begged her, so frantically, to stay.

“ You must not fear for me. I shall be

safe and well. I have planned it all, carefully, during these last long hours. I am sorry to have to leave in this way, but it will be for the best. And so—good-by."

She slipped quietly away. In a few moments he wildly followed. He caught sight of her at a distance and hastened after her, but she had feared he would attempt this, and stepped with a quickness that he could not rival. He lost her, and returned to his empty rooms.

"Ah!" cried the Armenian woman. "The daughter grieves no longer; but the father, he tears his hair and his beard!"

Selma went direct to a friend, a young Jewess whom she had met at the synagogue and for whom she had conceived a strong liking. The girl lived with her mother, a widow, far over toward the East River, on Houston Street, and both of them sewed for a bare pittance. The mother worked on coats, and the girl on shirts. They welcomed the drear-eyed girl cordially, and when she told her tale, asked for practical advice, and begged to stay with them, they at once agreed to care for her. They saw the justice, too,

of her request to keep secret the fact that she was staying with them, and they overwhelmed her with sympathy.

Through their pilotage, Selma secured sewing-work. She began upon it with a vigor that amazed them, for they knew that thus far in her life she had known nothing of real toil. Early in the morning she would arise, and would work till late at night. To aid her in maintaining her hiding-place as a secret, either the mother or daughter, for a long time, carried Selma's sewing to the shop. Selma, too, never went to her own synagogue, but on the Sabbath worshipped in another section of the city.

Weeks and months went uneventfully by. She did not meet a single one of her former acquaintances. She oftenest thought of Enoch, and loved to hear her two friends talk of him. She did not know that he was torn with anxiety about her; that even in the midst of his most important duties, or his dearest plans, he thought and thought of her. She did not know that he loved her, and deeply.

He had never declared his love, for he

had long hesitated, while she was but a girl, fearing to speak at a time when she was not old enough to decide so momentous a question, and dreading the possibility of taking advantage of her inexperience and securing an answer that she might regret when older. And then, when he had at length decided that he could speak, her father began a course of such rudeness of treatment as made him pause. He could not understand what lay behind it.

Now, Enoch had not the slightest idea where Selma was, or of the circumstances under which she had left her father's home. Weidberg, dull and dry and bitter, would tell him nothing. Enoch could only suspect, and he never suspected the truth. Nor could he suspect with what an agony of expectation the father watched for a letter or a message that never came.

In her work, Selma learned, with a down-sinking heart, that for a long time her unskilled fingers would not let her earn more than twenty-five or thirty cents a day. She had always been a seamstress, at home, but the gentle household sewing had not prepared her for the fierce swift-

ness that was necessary to earn even a pittance. After a while, by the hardest kind of work and greatly increased skill, she was able to earn forty cents each day, and began to feel almost happy.

To take advantage of a chance to earn perhaps forty-five cents a day (for her native skill and perseverance were telling in her favor), she at length agreed to go daily to the shop of the company that took her work. Nearly a year had passed since leaving her father, and New York streets were so filled with hundreds of thousands of people, that she thought she could avoid recognition. And even if he should meet her, why, he could not annoy her, after all. She was not his child!

And if she should meet Enoch? But she dared not think of this. Why had he not found her, if he wanted to see her, she asked herself, with feminine illogicalness.

Through denying herself all chances of friendly acquaintanceship, she was more lonely and more unhappy than were most of the women who, like herself, labored at sweat-shop toil for infinitesimal wages. Perhaps it was well for her that she was

busy for so many hours of every day, for at least it kept her from a certain amount of brooding.

And she came, gradually, to see the justice of the ideas of Enoch Heimann. She saw what an uplifting, what a freeing, was needed. In her own case, she felt too dependent on her daily toil, too anxious for the pittance that she earned, to dare join in urging rebellion, but before the year was up she came to have the keenest fellow-feeling with those who were trying to better the conditions under which so many thousands of men and women worked.

And finally there came a great strike, which affected not only her own establishment but scores of others. And, the strike once begun, Selma felt a burning desire for its success. If the sweat-shop workers should win, why, she might make ten cents more, every day, or five at the least! It seemed wealth to her.

When several of her companions told her, one afternoon, that there was to be a meeting, that night, at which the attendance would mainly be that of men, but at

which it was hoped to get as many women as possible so as to show the sweat-shop employers that the women also stood hand-in-hand in the struggle, she felt that she ought to go. When asked to promise, so that they could count on her, she said, yes, she would be one of them. A dozen or so were to meet together and go in a body. Other dozens of the women workers were to be similarly organized.

Not till she was on the way to the meeting did Selma learn that it was to be at the old building on Orchard Street, and for a moment her courage failed her. Then, but with a new glow at her heart, she went on.

The women were led to seats near the front. The hall was packed to suffocation. The low-ceilinged room held the people in a stifling heat. It was a summer night, torrid anywhere, even outside, and without a breath of wind blowing in at the windows. Men and women gasped for air, yet new arrivals constantly pressed in from the street, packing those who filled the jammed aisles still farther toward the platform. The encompassing mirrors re-

flected multifarious misery, yet also multifarious determination.

Each speaker faced a throng of eager listeners, who cheered and shouted and stamped their feet and excitedly called out strange ejaculations. It was seething humanity—seething physically, and seething mentally as well. Many were the dour and haggard faces that were there.

And Selma? She was thinking of how, long, long ago, she had listened to cheers and stampings from this very hall. Were the kindly old rabbis still up in the dusky book-room? Perhaps, some time in the evening Enoch Heimann would be there, too. A sudden burst of tears made her bow her head, and as she quietly sobbed there came a tremendous burst of applause, welcoming a new speaker. He had just arrived, and, being unable to get through the crowd, had come in at a window. As the roar of applause died down, and the speaker uttered his first word, Selma looked up. It was Heimann himself.

He thrilled his hearers. With alternate fervor and sadness he drew pictures of their lot. He urged them to stand to-

gether for relief from sweat-shop tyranny. And the people shouted and clapped, and some waved their arms in excitement, and some wept.

It was as he was beginning the main swing of his address that he caught sight of Selma—sad-faced, poorly dressed, haggard—but the same Selma! But he could not think of her till his speech was over—could not think of her, except to talk to her in his eloquence, and show that the established order of things, so far as it related to the condition and pay of the myriad garment-workers of the East Side, was vitally wrong, and that if a great league could be formed it might be capable of far-reaching good.

And Selma agreed with all that he said. Misery had taught her that. Yes. She was ready to forget all she had ever believed of submission to the power that exists.

And how strong and handsome Enoch was! Then came another burst of tears, for her year of privation and loneliness had sadly weakened her.

Somehow, then, as she bent her face

forward into her hands, she forgot that she was in a crowd. She forgot that she was a sweat-shop striker. She listened to Enoch's voice; and all she saw was the dusky dimness of the book-room, and the quiet walks homeward, with her hand laid trustingly in his.

She did not know that the meeting was over. She only knew that Enoch had stopped talking, and that there was a hoarse roar of shouts. She did not know that there was a rush of people to gather around the speaker, to grasp him by the hand, to tell him how well he had interpreted their conditions and their needs.

She found herself in a solid wedge of people, slowly pushing toward the door. Her heart sank bitterly. Was it all to



end thus? Were the future years to be but repetitions of the year just past?

There was a parting of the people about her. A voice was in her ear.

“Selma!”

“Enoch!”

It did not seem necessary to say anything more. She never doubted but that Enoch must understand it all. He took her hand and held it firmly in his. “It is long since we walked home together,” he said.

He was so loving, and yet so masterful. She sighed contentedly. “Yes. It is a long time,” she said, simply.

“But I will not lose you again, my Selma! We shall always walk home together! Always! Is it not so, my Selma?”

And again she gave a little sigh of perfect contentment.

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